elh VOL. 24, NO. 1
MARCH, 1957

TAMBURLAINE AND ATTITUDES TOWARD WOMEN

BY CHARLES BROOKS

Much of the interest in Marlowe that has been displayed in the last twenty years has been biographical, stimulated by the discoveries of rather sensational documents; but recently, perhaps as a development of that biographical interest, several critical attempts have been made to evaluate the spirit of aspiration or individualism which Marlowe's plays dramatize. Not all critics have, of course, agreed to find this spirit in the plays, any more than any audience, in Marlowe's day or since, has unanimously found the plays inspiring; Battenhouse in particular devoted a book to arguing that *Tamburlaine* is the tragedy of " uncontrolled, misdirected, and diseased passions." [1] But in most of the criticisms such descriptive phrases for Marlowe as " the most ruthless individualist of all the Elizabethan dramatists " [2] frequently recur. Boas, Poirier, and Levin have analyzed Marlowe's expression of individualism into a threefold quest for beauty, knowledge, and power (in Levin's phrases " the appetite for sensation," " the zeal for knowledge," and " the will to power "), and Levin calls these three quests three aspects of a single figure of speech, hyperbole.[3] But

[1] Roy W. Battenhouse, *Marlowe's Tamburlaine, A Study in Renaissance Moral Philosophy* (Nashville, 1941), p. 239.

[2] Philip Henderson, *And Morning in his Eyes* (London, 1937), p. 254.

[3] Frederick S. Boas, *Christopher Marlowe* (Oxford, 1940), p. 66; Michel Poirier,

XUM

Marlowe's women characters have received little attention. There seems to be a feeling that his women are embodiments,[4] abstractions,[5] or symbols [6] rather than living women "endowed with a soul." [7] Perhaps they do lack individualizing traits, but if so the ideas which Marlowe is embodying, concretizing, or symbolizing should be that much easier to discover by a careful consideration of his women. Marlowe's presentation in *Tamburlaine* of ideas about women is an important aspect of his dramatic "assertion of man's will." [8]

Many conventional situations and speeches involving women appear in *Tamburlaine*. No sonneteer's praise of a beautiful mistress exceeds in lavishness Tamburlaine's "quintessence of poesy" speech about Zenocrate. The Arabian prince praises her in similar courtly fashion, and in Part II Theridamas finds Olympia's beauty bright enough to light his dark tent. Woman is presented as a motive for action: as traditional courtly lovers underwent tests of loyalty to win a mistress' favors, so these men find their mistresses worth striving for. Women also appear in familiar romantic situations. Zenocrate first appears as a virtuous woman at the mercy of a man, and in Part II Olympia is even more clearly victimized when she is threatened by rape. Olympia is also constant in adversity, like Robert Greene's Dorothea and Angelica. Zenocrate on her second appearance feels, with admirable modesty, that she is unworthy of Tamburlaine. When Tamburlaine and the Sultan of Egypt prepare for battle, Zenocrate suffers a clash of loyalties like that of Alinda near the end of Lodge's *Rosalynde*. Conventionally scornful attitudes toward sinful women are often expressed; Zenocrate regrets that she is accused of inconstancy, Zabina heaps scorn upon her as Tamburlaine's whore, and Tamburlaine himself, like Peele's Absalon, expresses scorn for concubines. Zenocrate for a moment, upon Zabina's death, repents that she has been too vain and proud. And in the clash

Christopher Marlowe (London, 1951), p. 46; Harry Levin, *The Overreacher, A Study of Christopher Marlowe* (Harvard, 1952), p. 27.

[4] Philip Henderson, *Christopher Marlowe* (London, 1952), p. 85; Poirier, p. 131; Levin, p. 19.

[5] Henderson, *Morning*, p. 208.

[6] Poirier, p. 38; Henderson, *Marlowe*, p. 85.

[7] Poirier, p. 110. Henderson, *Morning*, p. 211, states, "He never evinces the slightest interest in women."

[8] Levin, p. 24.

XUM

between Zabina and Zenocrate, both women exercise the bitterness of the typical shrew.

These familiar attitudes, however, escape triteness because they do not exemplify a simple moral view. Inconstant women do not suddenly contract leprosy (like Henryson's Cressida), adulteresses are not struck by thunderbolts (like Remilia in Greene's *A Looking-Glass*), Olympia is saved from lust not by God or accident (like Spenser's Serena) but by her own wits. Characters are not simply virtuous or vicious; rather the ideas of virtue and vice are ideas which they use in their clashes with each other.

To the men in *Tamburlaine* beautiful women are treasures to be won; to the women beauty and virtue are the treasures which purchase honor; and courtship is a barter in which the man bids for the woman as treasure while the woman exacts the highest price possible. The first love scene between Tamburlaine and Zenocrate abounds in imagery of jewels and treasure, referring partly to such treasure as Zenocrate has with her and as Tamburlaine promises her, but also to the treasure which she herself is in his eyes. She tries to purchase freedom with her treasure, while he tries to persuade her to invest herself in his future, to risk her current worth on the prospect of becoming an empress. In his bargaining he offers lavishly—a hundred tartars mounted on swift steeds, garments of Medean silk encased with jewels, an ivory sled drawn by milk-white harts, and all his martial prizes. Finally he gives her a typical capitalist merger offer:

> If you will willingly remaine with me,
> You shall have honors, as your merits be:
> Or els you shall be forc'd with slaverie. (I. I. ii. 448-9) [9]

This courtship is reflected in Part II when Theridamas woos Olympia with the promise of a queenship, clothes of costly cloth and gold, a throne like Venus', and command of whatever she desires. She tries to buy him off as Zenocrate tries to buy off Tamburlaine, in this case offering a secret magic ointment. The scene ends with Theridamas envisioning Dis courting her in the underworld by " Opening the doores of his rich treasurie " (II. IV. ii. 3974).

[9] Citations from *Tamburlaine* refer to act, scene, and line numbering in the edition of Marlowe's works edited by C. F. Tucker Brooke (Oxford, 1910).

XUM

Courtship is, then, a bargaining. Men have to be worthy to have something to offer, and women have to be beautiful and virtuous to be valuable to worthy men. Honor is the greatest motivation. Tamburlaine relentlessly punishes those who fail to honor him properly. " Glory " is his aim, as he makes clear when, after lavishly praising beauty, he declares that virtue is more important than beauty: " Vertue solely is the sum of glorie " (I. V. ii. 1970). On his deathbed he urges his son to " Let not thy love exceed thyne honor " (II. V. iii. 4592). Honor motivates the women, too. Zenocrate regrets that her deeds are " infamous through the world " because she has changed her love from Arabia to Tamburlaine (I. V. ii. 2172-3); she does not regret the change, only the reputation it has gained her. Olympia appeals to Theridamas to " save her honor " (II. IV. ii. 3936); his suit seems to be honorable, since he offers to make her a queen, but she is so faithful to her dead husband that she fears a second marriage will dishonor her. Even the Turkish concubines appeal to Tamburlaine to " save their honours " (II. IV. iii. 4062); their sense of honor is not so strict as Zenocrate's or Olympia's, but to become the mistresses of common soldiers after having been the mistresses of kings is as much a disgrace to them as a second marriage is to Olympia.

In *Tamburlaine*, then, courtship is competition, and the end of courtship is conquest. The women are active, striving to attain individual aims, not passively virtuous women like the usual romantic heroines. Virtue is something to be attained rather than protected, beauty is an asset to be used, women are to be conquered rather than served, and delight in love is a vision of triumph. Destiny is to be moulded rather than endured. These feelings contribute significantly to the action and theme of the play.

In the usual romantic play, such as Greene's *Orlando Furioso* and *James IV*, the heroine early fixes on a worthy lover and then struggles against odds to unite with him. That union provides the harmony toward which the action inevitably moves. Zenocrate appears near the beginning of *Tamburlaine* in a romantic situation, but she does not choose Tamburlaine immediately, and when she does, she wins him quickly. The nature of harmony is thus not so evident either to Zenocrate or

the audience. But Zenocrate's own view of the action is a valuable guide for the audience throughout Part I.

Romantic approval of Zenocrate is evoked in her first appearance as a beautiful and virtuous princess in distressed circumstances. Her plea " Pity my distressed plight," her reference to her frailty as " a silly maide," and Tamburlaine's praise of her " faire face and heavenly hew " (I. I. ii. 203, 206, 232) establish the essential qualities of distress, innocence, and beauty. Her aim is apparently to live honored by the world for her virtue, but she lacks the vision to see clearly how best she can accomplish that aim. Tamburlaine recognizes her aim and to Tamburlaine that aim can be accomplished if she devotes herself to him, but her prior betrothal creates an impediment.

Zenocrate's next appearance provides her with a sharper sense of the direction she must follow. She is again distressed, but for a different reason—sorrow for her captivity has been " digested long agoe," but " a farther passion " (I. III. ii. 994, 998) has attacked her. Her desire to live virtuously has discovered in love for Tamburlaine a means of accomplishment. She is also romantically modest, suffering not from a doubt that her love is virtuous but from a fear that she is unworthy. Zenocrate has, then, in this scene, the same romantic appeal to an audience which Greene's Dorothea has because she displays the same faith and modesty in distressed circumstances. This romantic appeal secures her from the attack which Agydas launches upon her, his reference to her " offensive rape by Tamburlaine," his suggestion that she is Tamburlaine's " worthlesse Concubine," and his accusation of inconstancy (991, 1014, 1041) leaving the audience as unmoved as they leave Zenocrate and serving instead to place Agydas in a bad light. When Tamburlaine then " takes her away lovingly by the hand " (1051 s. d.), symbolically merging with her in a common enterprise, his action both justifies her love and serves as a just stroke of doom for Agydas. Henceforth the audience knows with Zenocrate that the way for her to live virtuous and honored is to devote herself to Tamburlaine, but neither Zenocrate nor the audience yet realizes all that such a devotion implies. For one thing, the Arabian prince threatens the serenity of the picture—Zenocrate's change of heart disturbs the portrait of a romantic heroine.

XUM

The battle of the shrews is partly a diversion but nevertheless affects the presentation of Zenocrate. Zabina's attack upon Zenocrate's moral character does not count for much during the battle of words because it is part of the game and because Zabina is the villain in the match; but thereafter Zabina is placed in a pathetic light. Though her suffering is deserved, it is nevertheless pitiable, and Zenocrate comes to regret her cruelty to Zabina. She suffers a minor tragedy in which her aim is temporarily, like that of Peele's Queen Elinor in *Edward I*, to be worshiped, and in which she suffers a sense of shame from her recognition of the evil of pride. The pattern of this minor tragedy is like the patterns of the tragedies of Greene's *A Looking-Glass*—evil desire, recognition, and repentance. Zenocrate's repentance and her awareness of the vanity of the world do not, however, shake her devotion to Tamburlaine. She doubts her lover's wisdom without wavering in her loyalty.

At the same time that she suffers from a sense of shame for her vanity, she suffers also from an inner conflict between her devotion to Tamburlaine and her loyalty to her father. She discovers in these two situations that success as Tamburlaine's partner requires sacrifice and suffering, and for a moment she doubts the wisdom of her choice because Tamburlaine's aim seems irreconcilable with her own desire to be honored for virtue. The Arabian prince to whom she was first betrothed now forces his way into her thoughts:

> My father and my first betrothed love,
> Must fight against my life and present love:
> Wherin the change I use condemns my faith,
> And makes my deeds infamous through the world.
> (I. V. ii. 2170-3)

The course of action which she has chosen to follow seems wrongly directed because the world's way of looking at things is in opposition. But she emerges from her debate with a new vision of Tamburlaine's triumph:

> For a finall Issue to my griefes,
> To pacifie my countrie and my love,
> Must Tamburlaine by their resistlesse powers,
> With vertue of a gentle victorie,
> Conclude a league of honor to my hope. (2177-81)

The world must come to look at things as Tamburlaine does. His victory provides Zenocrate with her victory as she becomes honored through the world as his empress. From desiring to be honored without knowing how she can attain that honor she proceeds to devotion to Tamburlaine, from there to a temporary acceptance of the world's view of Tamburlaine, and finally from there to an understanding that her success depends upon the imposition of Tamburlaine's own view upon the world. This final understanding is her achievement of a clear vision, and this vision is as gradually unfolded to the audience as it is to Zenocrate.

What Zenocrate discovers at the end, Tamburlaine sees from the beginning. He recognizes at the first her romantic nature, and he sees that she can fulfill her destiny only through devotion to him. Even after he persuades her to accept him, he has to demonstrate to her that they two are above, not subject to, the petty world about them. Tamburlaine's display of a glorious appreciation of Zenocrate's precious beauty contributes to his stature, and when this queen of beauty then humbly delivers her heart to him, his stature is increased still more, so that his overriding in the fourth and fifth acts of ordinarily approved feelings of pity and generosity serves to demonstrate that he is above the world's morality rather than that he fails according to the world's standards.

In his treatment of the Damascan virgins, although he is the tormentor of innocent victims, he acts, as he does in punishing Bajazeth and Zabina, as the scourge of presumptuous pride. When the first virgin, admonishing the governor of Damascus before going to Tamburlaine, scolds men who fail to provide adequately for their women, her speech places the Damascans in a bad enough light for Tamburlaine's later treatment of the virgins to suggest an angry Jehovah. Immediately after his execution of the virgins, Tamburlaine again expresses his appreciation of Zenocrate, winning the audience's favor by this appreciation in order to demonstrate to the audience the depth and clarity of his vision. In imaginative language he describes the effect which Zenocrate's pathetic concern for her father has upon him, an effect which seemed in the preceding act to be missing. Her sorrows, he says, lay more siege upon his soul than his armies do to the walls of Damascus (I. V. i. 1936-7).

XUM

He is not, then, incapable of pity, but he is above pity when it threatens the justice of his own cause. Then, after making the greatness of his love incontestable by describing how the quintessence of all the greatest love poetry in the world would still leave his love undescribed, he declares that that love is subject to a still greater aim—" Vertue solely is the sum of glorie " (1970). He expresses a worship of woman's beauty in order to make that worship demonstrate that the world about him, not only the imperfect individuals who make up its sum but the ordinary attitudes which they hold, must be made subject to his own superior virtue.

Zenocrate's story contributes to his triumph. The disapproval of her inconstancy which the world expresses through Agydas, Zabina, and finally Zenocrate herself changes in Tamburlaine's triumph to an acceptance of his own worship of her beauty and virtue. In the penultimate scene Zenocrate's former betrothed dies at her feet with a courtly expression of his love. He declares that he is satisfied to leave his blood for witness of his love, that the joy of her sight brings sweetness to his wound, and that he wishes he had an hour " to make discourse of some sweet accidents " (I. V. ii. 2204-5). These statements show him a noble courtier, but by contrast to Tamburlaine's passionate avowals they also show his love to be a common one. Arabia's death is not a mere accident nicely clearing the way for Zenocrate's redemption in the eyes of the world, but a necessary purge of a love not worthy of her.

The movement of action which is indicated by the relationship of Tamburlaine and Zenocrate is thus a special one. Discord prevails at first, and the question is how harmony will be established and what it will be like when it is established. Tamburlaine's dream of empery indicates the possibility of harmony, but Tamburlaine's full aim, his intention of teaching the world a true appreciation of virtue, is only gradually revealed. Zabina's vanity has first to be purged, then sentimental pity for the poor Damascan virgins, then Zenocrate's narrow view of honor, and finally the artificial love of Arabia. Tamburlaine purges also Mycetes' puerile vanity, Cosroe's treacherous ambition, and Bajazeth's tyranny. The full pettiness of the world is gradually revealed, the pettiness of personal vanity giving way to the pettinesses of treachery, self-pity,

narrow morality, and finally artificial chivalry. The harmony of the end is a display of noble magnificence as the kings crown Zenocrate and follow Tamburlaine to the marriage ceremony.

Marlowe thus controls attitudes toward women to present a heroine romantic in aim but only gradually learning how she can attain her aim, to contribute to the presentation of a hero above ordinary morality, and to contribute to action which gradually exposes the hero's nature at the same time that it gradually expands the picture of the world with which he is in conflict.

Marlowe's problem in Part II is more difficult. The theme is the same—the world is a place of discord as various strong men clash with each other, and Tamburlaine is the one who can impose order on the world by defeating all the others. This theme is especially clear when Tamburlaine prepares to battle a coalition of kings; after a long scene demonstrating the harmony between Tamburlaine and his generals, the enemy is shown engaged in a civil war which destroys the coalition. Again the inferiority of others is demonstrated when the boastful governor of Babylon proves cowardly under the threat of death. Protestations of virtue will not do—only constant action like Tamburlaine's can prove virtue. But Marlowe also has to present the dissolution of Tamburlaine's power. Even such a triumphant reign as his has to follow the descending curve of the cycle. So the dissolution of Tamburlaine's power has to be presented without diminishing his greatness.

This is partly accomplished by the presentation of more unbending kings than in Part I. There are several weaklings who are justly punished, contributing to Tamburlaine's stature as scourge, but there are also kings whose sturdy spirit invites admiration. Two strong men remain at the end, Callapine the son of Bajazeth and Amyras the son of Tamburlaine, either one strong enough to impose order on the world, but each committed to struggle against the other. In the last scene stress is laid on the lands yet unconquered by Tamburlaine. The point is both that there will never be so strong a man as he and that constant striving by a strong man yet imposes a measure of order on a chaotic world.

Although there is no heroine to guide the audience through

XUM

the action, two women have important roles. Olympia's little tragedy is one of the demonstrations of a strong will refusing to yield. Moreover, she is triumphant, and she achieves her triumph in death. Death is a union for her with her husband and son. The pity and admiration which are thus awakened for her prepare for Tamburlaine's own death. Earlier, when Zenocrate dies, Tamburlaine lavishly expresses his dependency on her; she is a great part of his life, and he keeps her coffin by him so that they can be buried together. Now as he is dying he has the coffin brought to him. Death is for him and Zenocrate, as for Olympia and her husband, a new marriage, just as he goes to be invested " in a higher throane,/ As much too high for this disdainfull earth " (II. V. iii. 4514-5). This marriage-in-death provides for Part II the same sense of triumph as the original marriage does for Part I.

A group of concubines appear in one important scene, and Tamburlaine clashes in his attitude toward them with the conquered kings. With proper moral scorn he calls them " Turkish harlots " (II. IV. i. 3839), while to the kings they are " guiltlesse Dames " (II. IV. iii. 4058). They themselves plead with Tamburlaine to save their honors. Tamburlaine despises them because their conception of honor has been too low, and he punishes them by the most effective means, giving them to the common soldiers. They were proud to be mistresses of kings, but now their pride is purged as they are forced to be common whores. It is an effective means, too, of punishing the kings, to whom the concubines were jewels which they proudly displayed. The kings had meant to entertain these mistresses by making Tamburlaine and his generals " jeasting Pageants " (4068) for them, but now the kings see their treasures so unvalued that they are despoiled by the conqueror's soldiers.

Tamburlaine's greatness is also demonstrated by an emphasis on the natural difference of man and woman. Zenocrate at the beginning protests against his continued warlike activity, and he retorts by complaining of the effeminacy of their sons. Woman is made for love, man for war. Tamburlaine encompasses both these natures, as he demonstrates in Part I when he loves Zenocrate exorbitantly without letting that love affect his virtue. His sons, however, can have only half his nature. Two choose to follow their father to war, while the third chooses

to luxuriate in wine and love. Effeminacy in this last is demonstrated early when he speaks of being satisfied to " keep " what Tamburlaine has already " won," thus placing himself in the role of housekeeper rather than breadwinner—a familiar dualism to Renaissance readers of such works as Elyot's *Defence of Good Women.* Tamburlaine gets some comfort from the fact that his spirit will live on in his two manly sons; but it cannot live on undiminished. The world loses by his death. But the spirit of aspiration lives on to ennoble men and women who strive in spite of desperate obstacles.

Familiar Renaissance attitudes toward women, erotic, courtly, romantic, and moral, find expression in *Tamburlaine,* but they do not illustrate a simple code. Erotic feelings are indulged through the identification of feminine beauty with treasure to be conquered through aspiration. These feelings are made to seem noble rather than base, thus presenting a conception of " noble " conduct markedly different from the one common to Renaissance books on conduct. Castiglione's courtier aims to serve, but Marlowe's heroes aspire to conquer. His women also strive vigorously for their own goals, and they are not prizes that are won by lovers who serve faithfully, but prizes that must be seized. Often romantic and moral attitudes belong to an environment which must be whipped by the triumphant hero. The world of *Tamburlaine* is not Hooker's harmonious universal order that is threatened by chaos when individuals refuse to serve in their proper stations, but a world of individuals in conflict with each other. Marlowe presents the evils of competition, the sufferings of the defeated, but he attributes these to individual weaknesses. *Tamburlaine* proclaims the nobility of will.

Lewis and Clark College

STERNE'S COCK AND BULL STORY

BY A. R. TOWERS

In the spring of 1767, Laurence Sterne, who was already half-dead from tuberculosis, developed an infection in the genital region. As he wryly describes it in the *Journal to Eliza* (April 24, 1767), his doctors insisted that his new complaint was a venereal disease, a diagnosis which Sterne protested: "—'tis impossible at least to be that, replied I—for I have had no commerce whatever with the Sex—not even with my wife, added I, these 15 years—." Such a revelation is no doubt interesting enough to the biographers of Sterne, but much more interesting to the reader of *Tristram Shandy* is the way in which this ignominious infection (in the " most painful, & most dangerous " part of the body) is associated with three incidents in that freakish novel. The story of his new ailment, Sterne says, is " as comically dis-astrous as ever befell one of our family—Shandy's nose—his name—his Sash-Window—are fools to it." These incidents—involving Tristram's nose, name, and sash-window—will play an important role in the present essay, for they are all aspects of its subject: the sexual comedy of *Tristram Shandy*.

We now know that Sterne quite early had a certain plan for *Tristram Shandy*, that he did not literally write the first sentence and trust to God Allmighty for the next; none the less, his plan was flexible and his book capable of an almost indefinite extension. Clearly, the work can not sensibly be treated in terms of a rounded whole, yet it has an inner coherence that is lacking in the picaresque novels of the age, unified though they are in part through the role of single character. *Tristram Shandy* is of a very different breed, and part of the fascination it still exercises lies in the curious tension that exists between its disordered surface and its fundamental, pervasive unity of theme and tone; it is a queer beast but still a living organism.

XUM

What I wish to do is to inquire into a particular aspect of this organic quality—the way in which Sterne's sexual references are related to the major characters and themes and, ultimately, to the style itself of *Tristram Shandy*. Such an inquiry will necessitate the breaking of a few butterflies on wheels and a sober-sided look at material that often emerges in Sterne's art as uproariously funny. It will also involve a firm resolution to avoid the problem of "conscious intentions." Sterne was a highly "conscious" writer, and in many passages he lets the reader know that he *knew* exactly what he was doing; in some instances, however, he would no doubt have been startled at my suggestions. I am none the less convinced that he—without the theoretical apparatus of modern psychology—would have at once admitted the role played by unconscious or preconscious associations in the creative process and that he would have agreed to the essentially romantic notion that an author many times writes both more and better than he knows.[1]

Perhaps the first thing to remark is that the matter of Sterne's comedy presents, if taken straight, an appalling catalogue of human woe. The list runs from the trivial annoyances of life—the interruptions, the cross-purposes, the inability to pursue a straight course—to what, in another sort of work, would be themes of the deepest tragic implication: the prison of the self, the fundamental incommunicability of human experience, the loneliness and absurdity of birth, copulation, and even death. Such is the grim cluster of motifs with which Sterne plays his marvellous game of artful dodging, thin-ice skating, and sting-pulling, converting them by his shrewdness, his sympathy, and above all by his unequalled sense of the incongruous into a rich fantasia of the laughable. No more than the others is the sexual motif inherently funny, for Sterne deals far more with the painful cross-purposes and even disasters

[1] In a recent article, "The Lockean Psychology of *Tristram Shandy*," Arthur H. Cash states that *Tristram Shandy* contains "no hint of the unconscious mind in the Freudian sense. The concept of the unconscious had only just begun in Germany and had not appeared in England." (*E. L. H.* XXII, June, 1955, p. 125, footnote 3). Without maintaining that Sterne had a developed theory or even "concept" of the unconscious, I believe that he, like many writers, had an insight into those mental functions which we would now call "unconscious." His works certainly show an awareness that a person's motives and actions may often be at variance with their representation in the conscious intellect.

of sex than with its happy fulfillment. It too must undergo a comic conversion.

The theme of sex is especially interesting in that it forms an analogy to the themes mentioned above. Perhaps "vehicle" is the better term, for sex is at once the major exemplar and the faithful mirror of incommunication, cross-purpose, interruption, and indirection. Furthermore, it forms an integral part of Sterne's creation of character; as James Work has pointed out in the admirable introduction to his edition of *Tristram Shandy*, "Usually his [Sterne's] bawdy is skilfully adapted to the actors in his comedy, to the characterization of whom it adds heightening touches." [2] The three main characters of the novel—Tristram, Uncle Toby, and Walter Shandy—each in his own way incorporates the recurrent motifs of *Tristram Shandy*, and to each there belong separate but overlapping spheres of sexual comedy. These have been classified as "the comedy of inadequacy," "the comedy of displacement," and "the comedy of frustration"—terms which I hope will become clear as the inquiry proceeds. I shall begin with Tristam, whose name, nose, and sash-window were referred to at the beginning of the article.

I. Tristram and the Comedy of Inadequacy

"Unhappy *Tristram!* child of wrath! child of decrepitude! interruption! mistake! and discontent!" (IV, 19). So runs Walter Shandy's lamentation following the misnaming of his ill-begotten son. Tristram, as even the most superficial reader of the novel will recall, is indeed the child of wrath, decrepitude, and interruption from the very moment of his conception, interrupted as it was Mrs. Shandy's famous and most untimely question as to whether her husband had remembered to wind the clock. Thus the "hero" and narrator is set off to a wretched and enfeebled start: he can never recover from the dispersal of the few "animal spirits" which his aging father had mustered for the once-a-month occasion. Blasted in his very conception, Tristram next suffers a physical injury at his

[2] *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, ed. James A. Work (N. Y., 1940), p. lx. All quotations from *Tristram Shandy* are taken from this edition; the roman and arabic numerals at the end of each quotation refer, respectively, to the book and chapter numbers of the original.

birth—the crushing of that most delicate and significant member, the nose, by the forceps of Dr. Slop, the Papist man-midwife. This maiming bodes no good for Tristram's future, for Sterne leaves the reader in no doubt as to the symbolic import of the nose and its crushing. Walter Shandy's " theory of noses " is elaborated with an amusing double-entendre shortly after the accident:

> He would often declare, in speaking his thoughts on the subject, that he did not conceive how the greatest family in *England* could stand it out against an uninterrupted succession of six or seven short noses.—And for the contrary reason, he would generally add, That it must be one of the greatest problems in civil life, where the same number of long and jolly noses following one another in a direct line, did not raise and hoist it up into the best vacancies in the kingdom. (III, 33)

And there is the whole long (and tedious) tale of Slawkenbergius to underline the symbolism of noses. As far as Tristram's mishap is concerned, the only consolation—as Uncle Toby points out—is that it might have been worse had the baby's hip, instead of his head, presented itself to Dr. Slop's instruments.

The third misfortune to cast its shadow over Tristram's future occurs shortly after his birth. The infant, who is weak and sickly, turns black in the course of a fit, and it is decided that he must be christened at once. So hurriedly is the christening carried out that the unhappy father, roused from his bed, is unable to reach the scene before the name which he had chosen—" Trismegistus "—is misconstrued by the bumbling chambermaid and curate into " Tristram." To appreciate the dire significance of this misnaming, we must remember that Walter Shandy believed " That there was a strange kind of magick bias, which good or bad names . . . irresistibly impress'd upon our characters and conduct." Thus to counterbalance the evil resulting from the injury to the baby's nose, Walter Shandy had selected " Trismegistus " as a name of legendary wisdom and magical potency; " Tristram," on the other hand, he regarded as the ultimate in nincompoopism, and believed that " it could possibly produce nothing in *rerum naturâ*, but what was extreamly mean and pitiful . . ." (I, 19).

The scattered conception, the crushed nose, and the mis-

carried magic in the naming of the hero—these symbolic " maimings " are followed by what comes perilously close to being the final sexual catastrophe. When Susannah, the nurse-maid, urges the five-year-old Tristram to make water out of the nursury window (in the absence of a chamber pot), the window-sash suddenly falls with what appear to be disastrous results for the little boy. Upon closer examination, however, it turns out that not castration but circumcision has occurred:

> Dear *Yorick,* said my father smiling, . . . this *Tristram* of ours, I find, comes very hardly by all his religious rites.—Never was the son of *Jew, Christian, Turk,* or *Infidel* initiated into them in so oblique and slovenly a manner. (V, 28)

One is struck here by the way in which Sterne seems to anticipate the modern anthropologists and psychoanalysts who regard circumcision as a ritualistic substitute for the graver deprivation. In any case, the threat has been made and withdrawn; the reader has been brought to the brink and then pulled back, relieved and even titillated. And the whole episode is turned into the purest comedy when Walter Shandy, instead of going for lint and basilicon to treat the injury, fetches up Spencer's *De Legibus Hebraeorum Ritualibus* and a folio of Maimonides from his library.

Such is the start in life which Sterne provides for Tristram, who is at once the narrator and " hero " of the novel. On both the literal and symbolic levels of action, these events of his early years are closely integrated with the subsequent development of Tristram as a character and—if we allow the narrator a voice independent of the author's—as a stylist. He is presented to us as a hero *manqué;* indeed, in his very lack of stature, Tristram is a sort of counter-hero—perhaps the first major representative of a type so important in modern fiction. As such he is very different from the comic heroes who had preceded him: the gloriously mad Quixote, the shrewd, earth-bound Sancho Panza, the resourceful knaves and *picaros,* the simple, straight-forward young men of Fielding. One would hardly exaggerate in saying that Tristram is closer to Theodore Gumbril or Paul Pennyfeather or even to Leopold Bloom than to Joseph Andrews. He is fortune's fool, not as a great figure betrayed by events, but as the ridiculous butt of life's practical jokes:

—I have been the continual sport of what the world calls fortune; and though I will not wrong her by saying, She has ever made me feel the weight of any great or signal evil;—yet with all the good temper in the world, I affirm it of her, that in every stage of my life, and at every turn and corner where she could get fairly at me, the ungracious Duchess has pelted me with a set of as pitiful misadventures and cross accidents as ever small HERO sustained.

(I, 5)

Much later in the book Tristram refers again to the " ungracious Duchess," this time, interestingly enough, after a sexual failure with his " dear Jenny." Standing with his garters in his hand and " reflecting upon what had *not* pass'd," he seeks to draw some use from adversity and whimsically wishes for greater misfortunes:

—Every thing is good for something, quoth I.—I'll go to *Wales* for six weeks, and drink goat's-whey—and I'll gain seven years longer life for the accident. For which reason I think myself inexcusable, for blaming Fortune so often as I have done, for pelting me all my life long . . . with so many small evils: surely if I have any cause to be angry with her, 'tis that she has not sent me great ones—a score of good cursed, bouncing losses, would have been as good as a pension to me. (VII, 29)

Again the incongruity of Tristram's reflections pulls the sting and converts an inherently painful situation into a rich absurdity.

But Tristram, unlike the other heroes, is not so much either agent or patient as he is narrator. It is as narrator that he reveals his character and relates himself to the other characters in the book. The motif of inadequacy or even impotence, which is symbolized by the successive " maimings " and is exemplified sexually by the incident with " dear Jenny " mentioned above, has its counterpart in the very mode of narration. One might compare Tristram as narrator to a clever but weak schoolboy in the company of young ruffians. Since he can not escape the attention of these actual or potential bullies, he does the next best thing: he ingratiates himself by playing the buffoon. He constantly draws attention to himself and apparently does not mind in the least if he loses his dignity and self-respect in the process. (Of course, *secretly* the schoolboy wishes he were strong and above such antics—but that is out of the question). It is somewhat in this light that Tristram presents himself to

his readers, the potential bullies. He is, however, far from humble about his approach. Being clever, he sees that it has possibilities for entertainment and originality that set it apart from more conventional modes. Accepting the limitations imposed from within and without upon his character, Tristram proclaims the individuality and worth of his method while at the same time furthering his ingratiation of the reader:

> Therefore, my dear friend and companion, if you should think me somewhat sparing of my narrative on my first setting out,—bear with me,—and let me go on, and tell my story in my own way:—or if I should seem now and then to trifle upon the road,—or should sometimes put on a fool's cap with a bell to it, for a moment or two as we pass along,—don't fly off,—but rather courteously give me credit for a little more wisdom than appears upon my outside;—and as we jog on, either laugh with me, or at me, or in short, do anything,—only keep your temper. (I, 6)

The psychology of the licensed fool is, of course, an extraordinarily complex one, and far beyond the scope of this essay. One aspect can, however, be mentioned in passing—an aspect that has particular relevance to Sterne's creation of Tristram. The fool or jester, like the related figure of the holy simpleton, so often pays for his freedom by some signal weakness. He is nearly always something less than a fully-endowed, adult, human being. He is physically frail, like Lear's fool, or deformed, or a little cracked, or a perpetual child; Harpo Marx is dumb and Charlie Chaplin is diminutive and a tramp. It is as though he must insure our superiority before we allow him to outrage us. He must ingratiate as well as clown, for whether as king or as potential bullies or as paying public, we hold the rod: "Take heed, sirrah—the whip." Thus the stunted, weak-lunged, half-impotent Tristram goes along his way, cutting capers, mocking, and sticking out his tongue—and all the while begging our indulgence: "either laugh with me, or at me, or in short, do anything,—only keep your temper."

Tristram's way of telling his story is as scattered, as accident-prone, as full of cross-purposes as his life itself. It is an art of self-interruption. It involves a surrender of that masculine, rational intelligence that can foresee ends and drive straight towards them, "as a muleteer drives on his mule,—straight forward;—for instance, from *Rome* all the way to *Loretto*, without ever once turning his head aside either to the right

hand or the left . . ." (I, 14). And it involves the glorification of the indirect and the oblique, an approach perfectly suited to a narrator who, even as a child, grieved his father by the " most unaccountable obliquity " with which he set up his top (I, 3). There is, furthermore, an implied scorn for the straight-forward muleteer as a fellow of no spirit. Tristram is well aware that the straight line has been extolled by clergymen as the proper path-way for Christians, by Cicero as the emblem of moral recitude, by cabbage-planters as the best line, and by Archimedes as the shortest line between two points. Yet, despite this imposing array of authorities Tristram wonders how it ever came to be confounded with " the line of GRAVITATION " (VI, 40). He is equally incapable of toeing a straight line or of maintaining a grave face.

Finally, the character of the narrator is reflected not only in the general structure of *Tristram Shandy* but in the form of its sentences as well. There is hardly a sentence that is not interrupted, cut across by some counter-movement of thought, before it is finished. The style is a fabric of qualifications; the favorite punctuation mark is the dash. Just as the haphazardness of the story's progress is the vehicle of Sterne's clowning on the situational level, so the broken sentence and the interjected phrase are the instruments of his verbal playfulness. His comedy leaps out from the mad juxtaposition, the sudden antic, the sublime incogruities of thought and word and posture and situation, just as it lurks in the double-entendre, the equivocal meaning. Cross-purposes, interruption, obliquity, and indirection—these are both the symptoms and the weapons of Tristram Shandy, the " small HERO."

Here the problem of the relationship of narrator to author becomes especially perplexed. One is tempted to speak indiscriminately of Tristram's style and of Sterne's style, of Tristram's wit and Sterne's playfulness. The same problem arises, of course, in connection with Mr. Yorick in *A Sentimental Journey*. Tristram is certainly to a considerable degree Sterne's mouthpiece, the intermediary between author and public. Yet he is just as certainly endowed with the attributes of a fully realized character with a voice and a history of his own. In any case, an extensive autonomy has to be allowed him for a study such as this. Fortunately, the dilemma largely disappears as

the troublesome "I" of Tristram gives way to the more comfortable third-person-singular of Uncle Toby and Walter Shandy.

II. Uncle Toby and the Comedy of Displacement

Compared to the flighty and garrulous instability of Tristram and to the frustrated gigantism of Walter Shandy, Uncle Toby's character is an idyll of sweet contentment and placidity. Yet this gentle old soldier, rosy with benevolence, is by far the most eccentric of Sterne's figures. He is indeed the "victim" of a monomania as absorbing and as exclusive as Captain Ahab's—but it is one that brings in its wake not rage and self-torture but the serenity of a happy child. The monomania or, to use Sterne's more lighthearted term, "Hobbyhorse" is, of course, Uncle Toby's obsession with fortifications and siegecraft.

Curiously enough, this obsession, like Ahab's, has its origin in, and draws its sustenance from, a wound: the wound which Uncle Toby received in his groin during the siege of Namur. Sterne is characteristically equivocal about the nature and extent of the wound; he plays with the subject from time to time, lingering over it and teasing the reader with hints and innuendoes. Early in the novel, for example, Sterne gives the following drastic account of Uncle Toby's extraordinary backwardness or "modesty" about sexual matters:

> . . . he got it, Madam, by a blow.—A blow!—Yes, Madam, it was owing to a blow from a stone, broke off by a ball from the parapet of a horn-work at the siege of *Namur*, which struck full upon my uncle *Toby's* groin.—Which way could that effect it? The story of that, Madam, is long and interesting. . . . (I, 21)

But in the last book Corporal Trim indignantly denies the insinuation of Bridget, the Widow Wadman's maid, that his master had been literally and physically shorn of his sex (IX, 28).

Whatever the nature of the physical wound, its symbolic import is as clear as that of Tristram's crushed nose. It is Uncle Toby's badge, the outward sign of the remarkable psychological processes with which Sterne endows him.

Uncle Toby's obsession with fortifications begins during his slow convalescence in London from the wound in his groin.

Unable to explain to his visitors the immense complexities of the siege of Namur—with its scarp and counterscarp, glacis and covered-way, half-moon and ravelin—Uncle Toby suffers an extreme frustration, which at length results in "sharp paroxisms and exacerbations of his wound." His problem is partially solved when he gets a large map of the fortifications of Namur, but this in turn sets him off wildly upon his hobbyhorse. As his preoccupation with siegecraft grows, the need for paraphernalia (maps, books, compasses, etc.) correspondingly increases and at last becomes cumbersome. It is at this point that the resourceful Corporal Trim suggests that, if only they were in the country, models of all the fortifications could be built according to scale. So excited is Uncle Toby by the prospect of indulging his hobby in such a concrete way that (his wound not quite healed) he and Trim leave London surreptitiously the very next day and "embark" for Shandy Hall, where he has "a little neat country-house of his own," with a kitchen-garden and bowling-green. From this point on, he is completely handed over to his obsession. "When a man gives himself up to the government of a ruling passion,—or, in other words, when his HOBBY-HORSE grows head-strong,—farewell cool reason and fair discretion!" (II, 5). Uncle Toby's mind now becomes almost as walled-in as his beloved forts, and some of the funniest passages in the book occur when some chance word or event from the outside world penetrates his thoughts and is immediately assimilated into the private world of siegecraft, fortifications, and armies. When, for example, Walter Shandy attempts to reach his left hand into his right coat pocket, Uncle Toby immediately thinks of the transverse zigzaggery of the defenses of Namur (III, 3).

The terms with which Uncle Toby's obsession are described are interesting. The striking thing is the remarkable degree to which the fortifications are regularly feminized and even sexualized. And the old soldier's attitude to them is that of an ardent lover. Uncle Toby blushes red as scarlet from pure joy as Trim outlines the project for constructing the model forts, and he pictures the secluded bowling-green at the bottom of the kitchen-garden as the perfect place for carrying out the scheme; it is this image which is "the physical cause of making him change colour, or at least, of heightening his blush to that

immoderate degree I spoke of." Then Sterne adds a passage that elaborates the sexual overtones of the enterprise: " Never did lover post down to a belov'd mistress with more heat and expectation, than my uncle *Toby* did, to enjoy this self-same thing in private." He goes on, in terms suggestive to a post-Freudian age, to describe the bowling-green as a secluded spot, sheltered by hedges and shrubbery, and states " that the idea of not being seen, did not a little contribute to the idea of pleasure pre-conceived in my uncle *Toby's* mind." Finally, the folly of Uncle Toby's desire for privacy leads to the exclamation: " Vain thought! however thick it was planted about,—or private soever it might seem,—to think, dear uncle *Toby*, of enjoying a thing which took up a whole rood and a half of ground,—and not have it known! " (II, 5). " Lover," " belov'd mistress," " heat," " expectation," " enjoy," " thing," " in private "—the analogy is unmistakable.

There has been, in effect, a displacement of Uncle Toby's sexual drives from their normal object (women) to a substitute object (fortifications). This substitute object has the advantages of being amenable to control and undemandingly pliant in a way that flesh-and-blood women notoriously are not. The fortifications are subject to manoeuvers but can not manoeuver themselves; nor can they raise embarrassing questions as to one's potency, as does the Widow Wadman in connection with Uncle Toby's wound. The degree of the displacement is indicated by the conjunction of an inordinate knowledge of military affairs with an almost total ignorance, on the other hand, of women and their ways. " To think, said my father, of a man living to your age, brother, and knowing so little about women! —I know nothing at all about them,—replied my uncle *Toby* " (II, 7). Yet, in a passage which indicates a remarkable insight on Sterne's part into the workings of the unconscious,[3] we find that on one level Uncle Toby is not as ignorant as he himself believes. It occurs when Walter Shandy admonishes his brother that he should at least " know so much as the right end of a woman from the wrong ":

—Right end,—quoth my uncle *Toby*, muttering the two words low to himself, and fixing his two eyes insensibly as he muttered them, upon a small crevice, form'd by a bad joint in the chimney-piece.—

[3] See footnote 1, above.

Right end of a woman!—I declare, quoth my uncle, I know no more which it is, than the man in the moon;—and if I was to think, continued my uncle *Toby*, (keeping his eye still fix'd upon the bad joint) this month together, I am sure I should not be able to find it out. (II, 7)

The process of displacement is to some extent reversable; thus a woman may be assigned the properties of a fort. There is a crude example in which Tristram teases the reader as to the word Uncle Toby would have used to complete the sentence, " My sister, mayhap, does not choose to let a man come so near her * * * *." For the " * * * *," the technical military term " Cover'd-way " is suggested: " 'tis a Metaphor;—and, I dare say, as fortification ran so much in my uncle *Toby's* head, that if had had been left to add one word to the sentence,—that word was it " (II, *6*). Much more significantly, the enterprise of courtship is endowed with all the attributes of a military campaign or siege. Such a metaphor is, of course, an old one and would be in no way remarkable were it not for the comic vitality afforded it by Uncle Toby's obsession. His courtship of the Widow Wadman, occupying most of Volumes VIII and IX, is the climatic action of *Tristram Shandy*. It is frequently adumbrated in the earlier volumes and usually in the terms mentioned above: " Indeed in my uncle *Toby's* case there was a strange and unaccountable concurrence of circumstances which insensibly drew him in, to lay siege to that fair and strong citadel." Or, later in the same chapter: " After a series of attacks and repulses in a course of nine months on my uncle *Toby's* quarter, . . . my uncle *Toby*, honest man! found it necessary to draw off his forces, and raise the siege somewhat indignantly " (III, 24). Uncle Toby, as it turns out, has far less enthusiasm for this siege than he had for real ones or for the one conducted on his bowling-green. So intense has the displacement been that all his fire and energy and passion have been drained away, as it were, from the pursuit of a real woman and channeled into the substitute drive. Thus, when Corporal Trim, having been informed of his master's " love " for the widow, advises a bold, frontal attack, Uncle Toby has deep misgivings:

—and as soon as your honour is clean shaved—and has got your clean shirt on, with your blue and gold, or your fine scarlet . . .

immoderate degree I spoke of." Then Sterne adds a passage that elaborates the sexual overtones of the enterprise: "Never did lover post down to a belov'd mistress with more heat and expectation, than my uncle *Toby* did, to enjoy this self-same thing in private." He goes on, in terms suggestive to a post-Freudian age, to describe the bowling-green as a secluded spot, sheltered by hedges and shrubbery, and states "that the idea of not being seen, did not a little contribute to the idea of pleasure pre-conceived in my uncle *Toby's* mind." Finally, the folly of Uncle Toby's desire for privacy leads to the exclamation: "Vain thought! however thick it was planted about,—or private soever it might seem,—to think, dear uncle *Toby*, of enjoying a thing which took up a whole rood and a half of ground,—and not have it known!" (II, 5). "Lover," "belov'd mistress," "heat," "expectation," "enjoy," "thing," "in private"—the analogy is unmistakable.

There has been, in effect, a displacement of Uncle Toby's sexual drives from their normal object (women) to a substitute object (fortifications). This substitute object has the advantages of being amenable to control and undemandingly pliant in a way that flesh-and-blood women notoriously are not. The fortifications are subject to manoeuvers but can not manoeuver themselves; nor can they raise embarrassing questions as to one's potency, as does the Widow Wadman in connection with Uncle Toby's wound. The degree of the displacement is indicated by the conjunction of an inordinate knowledge of military affairs with an almost total ignorance, on the other hand, of women and their ways. "To think, said my father, of a man living to your age, brother, and knowing so little about women! —I know nothing at all about them,—replied my uncle *Toby*" (II, 7). Yet, in a passage which indicates a remarkable insight on Sterne's part into the workings of the unconscious,[3] we find that on one level Uncle Toby is not as ignorant as he himself believes. It occurs when Walter Shandy admonishes his brother that he should at least "know so much as the right end of a woman from the wrong":

—Right end,—quoth my uncle *Toby*, muttering the two words low to himself, and fixing his two eyes insensibly as he muttered them, upon a small crevice, form'd by a bad joint in the chimney-piece.—

[3] See footnote 1, above.

Right end of a woman!—I declare, quoth my uncle, I know no more which it is, than the man in the moon;—and if I was to think, continued my uncle *Toby*, (keeping his eye still fix'd upon the bad joint) this month together, I am sure I should not be able to find it out. (II, 7)

The process of displacement is to some extent reversable; thus a woman may be assigned the properties of a fort. There is a crude example in which Tristram teases the reader as to the word Uncle Toby would have used to complete the sentence, " My sister, mayhap, does not choose to let a man come so near her * * * *." For the " * * * *," the technical military term " Cover'd-way " is suggested: " 'tis a Metaphor;—and, I dare say, as fortification ran so much in my uncle *Toby's* head, that if had had been left to add one word to the sentence,—that word was it " (II, *6*). Much more significantly, the enterprise of courtship is endowed with all the attributes of a military campaign or siege. Such a metaphor is, of course, an old one and would be in no way remarkable were it not for the comic vitality afforded it by Uncle Toby's obsession. His courtship of the Widow Wadman, occupying most of Volumes VIII and IX, is the climatic action of *Tristram Shandy*. It is frequently adumbrated in the earlier volumes and usually in the terms mentioned above: " Indeed in my uncle *Toby's* case there was a strange and unaccountable concurrence of circumstances which insensibly drew him in, to lay siege to that fair and strong citadel." Or, later in the same chapter: " After a series of attacks and repulses in a course of nine months on my uncle *Toby's* quarter, . . . my uncle *Toby*, honest man! found it necessary to draw off his forces, and raise the siege somewhat indignantly " (III, 24). Uncle Toby, as it turns out, has far less enthusiasm for this siege than he had for real ones or for the one conducted on his bowling-green. So intense has the displacement been that all his fire and energy and passion have been drained away, as it were, from the pursuit of a real woman and channeled into the substitute drive. Thus, when Corporal Trim, having been informed of his master's " love " for the widow, advises a bold, frontal attack, Uncle Toby has deep misgivings:

—and as soon as your honour is clean shaved—and has got your clean shirt on, with your blue and gold, or your fine scarlet . . .

XUM

—and every thing is ready for the attack—we'll march up boldly, as if 'twas to the face of a bastion; and whilst your honour engages Mrs. *Wadman* in the parlour, to the right—I'll attack Mrs. *Bridget* in the kitchen, to the left; and having seiz'd that pass, I'll answer for it, said the corporal, snapping his fingers over his head—that the day is our own.

I wish I may but manage it right; said my uncle *Toby*—but I declare, corporal I had rather march up to the very edge of a trench—

—A woman is quite a different thing—said the corporal.

—I suppose so, quoth my uncle *Toby*. (VIII, 30)

At length, clad in his military blue and gold coat, wearing his great " ramallie " wig and carrying his cane like a pike, Uncle Toby presents himself, after much stalling, at Mrs. Wadman's front door. And then begins the joke for which Sterne has been preparing so long—the great, climactic joke concerning the nature of Uncle Toby's wound. Her first husband having been " afflicted with a Sciatica," the widow, before accepting Uncle Toby's proposal, is naturally curious to know the exact state of his disability. Reluctant to ask too direct a question, she goes " round about by Namur to get at my uncle *Toby's* groin." She questions the captain more and more searchingly about the wound until Uncle Toby, greatly moved by her tender interest, promises the lady that she " shall see the very place " where he received it—and, while she is blushing wildly at the thought, sends Trim off to fetch the map of Namur from the garret! Later, as Uncle Toby measures off the distance on the map and with " a virgin modesty " lays her finger on the very spot where he received the wound, the widow is forbidden by the gooddess of Decency to explain her mistake (IX, 20, 26). Thus Uncle Toby's obsession brings about the supreme example of cross-purposes in a book which is to such a large extent built upon them.

A brave soldier with a more than feminine tenderness, an intrepid conqueror of fortified places who does not even know the right end of a woman, a holy innocent with a wound in his groin—such are the paradoxical and equivocal characteristics of Sterne's most famous comic creation.

XUM

III. Walter Shandy and the Comedy of Frustration

Of the three Shandy males, Walter Shandy is by far the most vigorous. He is a formidable personage, beside whom the flighty Tristram and the benign Uncle Toby seem pliant and yielding, like jellyfish surrounding a crab. Strong-minded and stubborn, he is exceptionally vocal, a man capable of the passionate utterances of lamentation and denunciation; he is the sort who shakes his fist or beats his breast or calls upon Heaven to strengthen his righteous arm. Very much the *pater familias,* Walter Shandy is the lord and master of a meek wife, the local squire who summons to his table the parson and the doctor, the " impropriator " of the parish tythes and the keeper of the parish bull. Yet despite the show of great forcefulness and power, he is, in the long run, as absurdly ineffectual as his brother or son.

A full account of Walter Shandy's epic frustrations would encompass a major part of the novel. The misfortunes which Tristram endures in his conception, delivery, and naming are, to an equally great extent, the misfortunes of his father, for it is he who set such store on their happy outcome and he who must lament the frustration of his hopes. Behind each special hope for his son's birth lay an immense theory, constructed from prodigious efforts of learning and ratiocination. The theory of the noses and the theory of names have already been mentioned in connection with Tristram. It is in the attempt to realize these formulations in the actualities of life that Walter Shandy is constantly baffled; his mountains of learning invariably give birth to mice, his largest cannon either misfire or go off with the feeblest of pops. The abyss between his beautifully articulated world of theory and the irksome, messy world of experience is ultimately unbridgeable, despite his repeated efforts to cross from the one to the other. Descartes is continually being tripped up by Hume.

In addition to the perversity of events, Walter Shandy also has to reckon with interruption, cross-purposes, disagreement, and simple incomprehension or indifference on the part of his hearers. When riding hard on his hobby-horse of hypothesizing, he is likely to be unseated by a nudge of common-sense or by having another hobby-horse, especially Uncle Toby's, cross his path. Even his lamentations are subject to this kind of termina-

XUM

tion. When Walter Shandy hears that the new-born Tristram's nose has been crushed, he rushes to his chamber and throws "himself prostrate across his bed in the wildest disorder imaginable, but at the same time, in the most lamentable attitude of a man borne down with sorrows, that ever the eye of pity dropp'd a tear for" (III, 29). At length, comforted by the kindly presence of his brother Toby, he breaks silence:

> Did ever man, brother *Toby,* cried my father, raising himself up upon his elbow, and turning himself round to the opposite side of the bed where my uncle *Toby* was sitting in his old fringed chair, with his chin resting upon his crutch—did ever a poor unfortunate man, brother *Toby,* cried my father, receive so many lashes?—The most I ever saw given, quoth my uncle *Toby,* . . . was to a grenadier, I think in *Makay's* regiment.
>
> —Had my uncle *Toby* shot a bullet thro' my father's heart, he could not have fallen down with his nose upon the quilt more suddenly.
>
> Bless me! said my uncle *Toby.* (IV, 3)

The sudden deflations of his soaring eloquence are bad enough, but perhaps even more frustrating is the perfect compliance which this man, who thrives on argumentation, has to endure from his wife. There is nothing he can say with which she will not agree; it is impossible to get a rise out of her. This good-natured apathy on the part of Mrs. Shandy was, in Tristram's words, "an eternal source of misery to my father, and broke the neck, at the first setting out, of more good dialogues between them, than could have done the most petulant contradiction" (IX, 11).

Basically, Walter Shandy's frustrations stem from a failure to communicate, to make the essential connections between himself and the world around him. He can put nothing across to his wife or carry through one of his trains of thought with any chance of winning assent or even of avoiding interruption or miscomprehension. Failure to communicate is, of course, pandemic in the Shandy household, but it receives its most vivid exemplification in the case of Walter Shandy. And it is here that the sexual analogy becomes relevant, for the sexual act is, among other things, an attempt to communicate at the most elemental level.

Walter Shandy's attitude towards sex is one of unconcealed contempt. The instinct so obviously belongs to that untidy

realm of human experience that is unamenable to rational control. For the sexual appetite Walter Shandy regularly employs the word " ass," a term he got from St. Hilarion:

> It pleased my father well; it was not only a laconick way of expressing—but of libelling, at the same time, the desires of the lower part of us; so that for many years of my father's life, 'twas his constant mode of expression—he never used the word *passions* once—but *ass* always instead of them. . . . (VIII, 31)

Thus, when Uncle Toby falls in love with the Widow Wadman, his brother asks, " and how goes it with your Asse? "—a word which Toby mishears as " arse " and immediately construes as referring to a blister received in that area during his morning's ride on horseback " (VIII, 32). Furthermore, Walter Shandy denies that he gets any pleasure from the act: " Not a jot," he answers shortly, when Dr. Slop rudely suggests that he increases his own pleasure by begetting children for the Shandy family so late in life (II, 12). Walter Shandy carries his aversion to the point of making himself a learned authority on the classical " refrigerants," or remedies for the sexual appetite —mostly derived from Burton. In his famous letter to Uncle Toby he advises him to cure his passion for the Widow Wadman by bleeding himself below the ears, by abstaining from the flesh of goats, red deer, foals, and (" as much as thou canst ") from peacocks, cranes, coots, didappers, and water-hens, and by drinking such refrigerants as vervain and hanea (VIII, 34); he even goes so far as to have a new pair of Uncle Toby's breeches made from cloth impregnated with camphor, reputedly a most powerful anaphrodisiac (VI, 36).

The man of method and gravity, Walter Shandy, despite his impressive theoretical equipment, is anything but successful in the realm of sex. Here the famous opening chapters of the book provide the classic example of frustration by interruption. Grave and deliberate in every thing he does, Walter Shandy not only relegates his " little family concernments " to the first Sunday of the month but goes about the business of begetting a child with elaborate concentration, for the act of propogation " required all the thought in the world." It is, of course, at such a moment, when all his powers (mental and physical) are brought into play, that Mrs. Shandy asks if he has remembered to wind the clock. " *Good G—*! cried my father, . . . *Did ever*

woman, since the creation of the world, interrupt a man with such a silly question? " Although he has relegated such concern to one night per month, Walter Shandy is none too sure of himself even on such a limited schedule. On one occasion he sees Yorick's congregation leaving church and is reminded by his wife that it is sacrament day—that is, the first Sunday of the month. " The first Lord of the Treasury," writes Sterne, " thinking of ways and means, could not have returned home, with a more ambarrassed look." (IX, 11). His inability to impress his wife sexually is a perfect counterpart to his inability to impress her intellectually: " Cursed luck!—said he to himself, . . . for a man to be master of one of the finest chains of reasoning in nature,—and have a wife at the same time with such a head-piece, that he cannot hang up a single inference within side of it, to save his soul from destruction." (II, 19).

It is Walter Shandy's bull that provides the most appropriate and amusing symbol of his master's predicament. In what Parson Yorick calls a " cock and bull " story, Sterne describes—at the very end of *Tristram Shandy*—the unusual plight of the bull which Walter Shandy, as the local squire, is obliged to keep for servicing the parish cows:

> Now the parish being very large, my father's Bull, to speak the truth of him, was in no way equal to the department; he had, however, got himself, somehow or other, thrust into employment—and as he went through the business with a grave face, my father had a high opinion of him.

Now when this bull—the ancient emblem of a terrifying potency—fails to produce results with a local cow, Walter Shandy feels for the beast keenly and utters the following lament to his brother:

> . . . this poor Bull of mine, who is as good a bull as ever p-ss'd, and might have done for *Europa* herself in purer times—had he but two legs less, might have been driven into Doctors Commons [where divorces were contracted] and lost his character—which to a Town Bull, brother Toby, is the very same thing as his life—
> (IX, 33)

Thus Walter Shandy and his bull take their place with those ineffectual giants who provide one of the perennial comic spectacles. We laugh at the battleship *Missouri*, stuck on a mud-flat, and we laugh at the blinded Polyphemus, bellowing

from his cave. Such remarkable equipment, we think, and such ridiculous results. Walter Shandy, too, has some of the attributes of gigantism; one has only to think what a formidable figure he would be if his elaborate theories *did* bear results, if he *did* manage to impress some one with the weight of his arguments. But he never does, and we laugh at him affectionately and perhaps with a sense of relief. The disarmed giant has become disarming.

Queens College

AUGUSTINE'S THEODICY AND JOYCE'S AESTHETICS

BY J. MITCHELL MORSE

Saint Augustine, whose name Joyce bore within his own, was partly responsible for the dramatistic theory of art set forth in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and followed to a greater or less degree in all Joyce's works. He was also partly responsible for Joyce's theory of the godlike artist, and perhaps to some extent even for his conviction of the irrelevance of moral standards to artistic judgment.[1] The three ideas are all of a piece, each supporting and supported by the others, in Augustine's theodicy as in Joyce's aesthetics. This is not to say that Joyce was an Augustinian, except in the sense that, being preoccupied with the ideas we most strongly oppose, we are willy-nilly influenced by them; in the same way that Augustine turned the devices of pagan rhetoric "to a Christian use, . . . to the defense of our way,"[2] Joyce turned certain Augustinian notions to the service and defense of art.

Genius has little reverence for ideas. It uses them. Joyce used Augustine and the whole classic tradition for new purposes. The Platonic notion that the arts and sciences were properly subordinate to politics became among Christian thinkers the belief that they were properly handmaids of theology; not until Joyce did any artist dare to "kill the priest and the king" within himself (*Ulysses* 574),[3] to regard both politics and

[1] The chief source of this last theory was Thomas Aquinas. See my paper, "Joyce and the *Summa Theologica*," scheduled for the first issue of *The James Joyce Reviews*.

[2] *De Doctrina Christiana* II. 40, IV. 2 (Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, XXXIV, 63 [C], 64 [A], 89 [D]–90 [A]): "in usum convertanda Christianum . . . in usum nostrum vindicanda. . . . Cum ergo sit in medio posita facultas eloquii, quae ad persuadenda seu prava seu recta valet plurimum; cur non bonorum studio comparatur, ut militet veritati . . . ?"

[3] The numbers in parentheses refer to the Modern Library editions of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1928) and *Ulysses* (1934), the Viking Press

theology as nothing more than materials for art, and to subordinate both church and state to the personality of the artist. "You die for your country, suppose," says Stephen Dedalus to the British soldiers. "Not that I wish it for you. But I say: Let my country die for me" (576). And to Bloom he says, "You suspect . . . that I may be important because I belong to the *faubourg Saint-Patrice* [that suburb of the Church] called Ireland for short. . . . But I suspect . . . that Ireland must be important because it belongs to me" (629). The same notion appears in *Stephen Hero* (246). In the *Portrait*, announcing his artistic intention, he asserts that he will try to fly by means of the nets that have been flung at him —the nets of nationality, language and religion (238). Certainly Joyce was aided in his flight by the net of Augustinian theodicy.

Augustine worked in the shadow of Tertullian by the light of Cicero and Quintilian. Though he had the best education the age afforded, though he was the master of an ornately beautiful Latin style and (to his sorrow) never lost his pagan delight in a well-turned sentence, he did not approve of secular learning or literary art except as means of propagating the faith. The roots of his attitude were in the classic tradition itself. Under the dictatorship of Julius Caesar, when thoughtful public discussion was penalized, when fools orated and wise men stayed at home, when rhetoric had no content and wisdom no tongue, Cicero set forth a regime of education for the man who he hoped would one day restore republican liberty—the informed and intelligent speaker, the *doctus orator*, no philosopher king but a private citizen willing to speak out for the public good and able to speak effectively.[4] Quintilian—for whom, as a Stoic, virtue was an end in itself and outward circumstances could not be helped—was less interested in promoting liberty than in persuading individuals to amend their lives. At his hands, therefore, the ideal of the informed speaker was transmogrified into that of the good man skilled in speaking—Cato's *vir bonus dicendi peritus*.[5] Quintilian's *Institutio*

edition of *Finnegans Wake* (1939), and the second New Directions edition of *Stephen Hero* (1955).

[4] *De Oratore* II. xx. 85, II. xliii. 182.

[5] *Institutio Oratoria* X. i. 1.

XUM

Oratoria, the fruit of twenty years of teaching, had a strong effect on such early Christian thinkers as were not absolutely opposed to the reading of pagan books, notably on Saint Augustine, who in any case had read it before his conversion. From the good man skilled in speaking it was an easy transition to the Christian skilled in teaching, the ideal of *De Doctrina Christiana*.[6] That was a considerable advance over the attitude of Tertullian, who (having a magnificently developed *odium theologicum*) had written, "What has Jerusalem to do with Athens? Or the Church with the Academy? Or Christians with heretics? . . . We who have Jesus Christ need no curiosity; we who have the Gospel need no investigation."[7] But Saint Augustine, who was concerned to explain the fact of evil in a world made by a good and omnipotent God, took a more liberal attitude: "Let everyone who is a good and true Christian know that truth is the truth of his Lord, wheresoever it be found"; since the liberal arts developed by the pagans are "better suited to the service of truth," and since even pagan philosophy contains truths that support the faith, Christians should take such arts and truths from their "wrongful possessors"[8] and use them "for the confuting of heretics."[9]

Augustine's specific use of them was to justify God's ways by portraying Him as an artist—a conception that profoundly influenced Joyce's view of himself as artist and of the creative process. Though it is wicked to study music for its own sake,

[6] *De Doctrina Christiana* IV. 15, 16, 27, 28 (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIV, 103 [A]–104 [D], 118 [A]–120 [C]).

[7] *Liber De Praescriptionibus Adversus Haereticos* VII (Migne, *P. L.*, II, 20 B–21 A): "Quid ergo Athenis et Hierosolymis? quid Academiae et Ecclesiae? quid haereticis et Christianis? . . . Nobis curiositate opus non est, post Christum Jesum; nec inquisitione, post Evangelium." Cf. II Corinthians 6: 14-16.

[8] *De Doctrina Christiana* II. 18, 40 (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXIV, 49 [D], 63 [A-B]): "imo verus quisquis bonus verusque christianus est, Domini sui esse intelligat, ubicumque invenerit veritatem. . . . Philosophi autem qui vocantur, si qua forte et fidei nostrae accommodata dixerunt, maximi Platonici [i. e., the Neo-Platonists], non solum formidanda non sunt, sed ab eis etiam tanquam injustis possessoribus in usum nostrum vindicanda . . . etiam liberales disciplinas usui veritatis aptiores, et quaedam morum praecepta utilissima continent, deque ipso uno Deo colendo nonnulla vera inveniuntur apud eos."

[9] *De Musica* VI. xvii. 59 (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXII, 1194 [A]): "Quod tamen facere non auderemus, nisi multos pios Ecclesiae catholicae matris optimae filios, qui puerilibus studiis loquendi ac disserendi facultatem quantum satis est consecuti essent, eadem refellendorum haereticorum necessitate fecisse videremus."

said Augustine, we can learn from it what great souls learn by flights of intuition: that in nature, as in a perfect poem, nothing is accidental or unintended; that just as a syllable may be replaced by an interval of silence, or a long syllable by two short ones or by a short one and a rest, and the whole poem gain in artistic interest by the variations thus achieved without breaking the rhythmic pattern, so all seeming inequalities, whether of the stars in their courses or of human beings in theirs, "join in melodious succession, as it were in a song of the universe."[10] Let us not complain if it falls to our lot to be a short syllable or even a rest. If we cannot apprehend the harmony, the order, the justice of the whole and of our position in it, neither can a statue in an outer niche of a building see the whole building, or a soldier in the front line of battle the disposition of the whole army. We are disposed in the order of things according to our merit as predetermined by God's will, "not knowing what beauty divine providence will bring forth by means of us." If, for example, God ordains us to have a wicked will and violate His law, that is not wicked of Him: He does it only in order that the punishment of our imperfection may fulfill the law and demonstrate its perfection. Thus God's good works subsist even in man's bad works.[11]

This notion is developed more fully in the *Enchiridion*. Since nothing happens against God's will; since even when the wicked, "as far as they themselves are concerned," act against His will, His will concerning them is thereby fulfilled; since "as far as His omnipotence is concerned" they do His will by opposing

[10] *Ibid.*, VI. xi. 29 (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXII, 1179 [D]): "Ita coelestibus terrena subjecta, orbes temporum suorum numerosa successione quasi carmini universitatis associant."

[11] *Ibid.*, 1179 [D]–1180 [A-B]: "In quibus multa nobis videntur inordinata et perturbata, quia eorum ordini pro nostris meritis assuti sumus, nescientes quid de nobis divina providentia pulchrum gerat. Quoniam si quis, verbi gratia, in amplissimarum pulcherrimarumque aedium uno aliquo angulo tanquam statua collocetur, pulchritudinem illius fabricae sentire non poterit, cujus et ipse pars erit. Nec universi exercitus ordinem miles in acie valet intueri. Et in quolibet poemate si quanto spatio syllabae sonant, tanto viverent atque sentirent, nullo modo illa numerositas et contexti operis pulchritudo eis placeret, quam totam perspicere atque approbare non possent, cum de ipsis singulis praetereuntibus fabricata esset atque perfecta. Ita peccantem hominem ordinavit Deus turpem, non turpiter. Turpis enim factus est voluntate, universum amittendo quod Dei praeceptis obtemperans possidebat, et ordinatus in parte est, ut qui legem agere noluit, a lege agatur . . . quia et in malis operibus nostris Dei opera bona sunt."

it; since He thus achieves His good purposes "through the evil wills of evil men,"[12] it follows that the individual is of no consequence or value as such but only as part of the grand design. In his polemic *Against the So-called Fundamental Letter of Manichaeus*, Augustine states this clearly and justifies it in terms of God's artistry: "Just as the utterance of the voice passes away and perishes in silence, and yet our speech is formed by the departure and succession of passing words, and is properly and pleasantly divided by intervals of silence, so likewise the humble beauty of temporal natures is formed and made distinct by the passing away of things and the death of those born."[13] Their beauty, that is, inheres less in themselves than in their relationships and the patterns they make. The same notion appears in *De Musica*: since the perfection of a poem requires that the individual syllables pass away, and since man is an instrument of God's will as a syllable is an instrument of the poet's will, "God, supremely good and supremely just, grudges no beauty, whether it be achieved by the soul's damnation, or retreat, or endurance."[14] Evil being a merely negative condition, an absence or deficiency of good, the function of the evil man in God's work is analogous to that of a rest in music. Thus does God compose the poem of the universe without regard to man's limited and self-interested notions of right and wrong. God is an artist, not a humanitarian. Augustine says specifically, quoting Romans 9: 11-21, that we are not qualified to impugn His justice.[15]

It hardly needs saying that such a God is not understandable

[12] *Enchiridion de Fide, Spe et Charitate* C, CI (Migne, *P. L.*, XL, 297 [B], [C]): "Quantum enim ad ipsos attinet, quod Deus noluit fecerunt; quantum vero ad omnipotentiam Dei, nullo modo id efficere valuerunt. Hoc quippe ipso quod contra voluntatem facerunt ejus, de ipsis facta est voluntas ejus. . . . Nam Deus quasdam voluntates suas, utique bonas implet per malorum hominum voluntates malas."

[13] *Contra Epistolam Manichaei quam vocant Fundamenti* XLI. 47 (Migne, *P. L.*, XLII, 205 [D]): "Nam et species vocis emissae praeterit, et silentio perimitur; et tamen sermo noster ex praeteriuntium verborum decessione ac successione peragitur, et moderatis silentiorum intervallis decenter suaviterque distinguitur: ita sese habet etiam temporalium naturarum infima puchritudo, ut rerum transitu peragatur, et distinguatur morte nascentium."

[14] *De Musica* VI. xvii. 56 (Migne, *P. L.*, XXXII, 1191 [B]): "Deus autem summe bonus, et summe justus, nulli invidet pulchritudini, quae sive damnatione animae, sive regressione, sive permansione fabricatur."

[15] *Enchiridion* XCIX (Migne, *P. L.*, XL, 278).

in human terms; that is one of the central doctrines of Augustine's Neo-Platonic Christianity. Rare spirits at rare moments have had glimpses of the inexplicable splendor, but their efforts to communicate the experience to us who are more grossly made or less finely tuned are never quite successful; they all have reason to complain with Richard Rolle that we understand the verses of their song but not the song of their verses.[16] Joyce had more natural piety than most of us, and in the *Portrait* Stephen once experiences the mystic union, " the ecstasy of seraphic life " (255). But the experience takes place in a dream, and is never repeated in any waking hour. The child who can " encounter reality " only through imaginary participation in formal religious rites (184) becomes a youth who can encounter it only through art (299). But the need to encounter it remains unchanged. Stephen recalls how one evening " he had dismounted from a borrowed creaking bicycle to pray to God in a wood near Malahide. He had lifted up his arms and spoken in ecstasy to the sombre nave of trees, knowing that he stood on holy ground and in a holy hour. And when two constabulary men had come into sight round a bend in the gloomy road he had broken off his prayer to whistle loudly an air from the last pantomime " (273). The disposition that led to such a moment, however, was forced to find a different mode of expression. There were too many constables in Joyce's own mind. There was Moynihan, for example, speaking of ellipsoidal balls (224, 256); and there was William of Ockham, asking, if the whole body of Christ was physically present in the Host, how it could be in two churches at the same time (*Ulysses* 41). Thus Joyce faced the dilemma every intellectual with a strong religious impulse must face, but his solution was the opposite of the mystics'. They disavow reason; he disavowed faith. It was difficult. " I am a product of Catholicism," said the hero of *Stephen Hero*; " I cannot in a moment destroy every feeling in my nature. That takes time " (139). It took his whole life. Joyce never destroyed his native piety to such an extent that he could ignore it. Like the reformed drunkard who, lacking a normal ability to take it or leave it,

[16] C. Horstman[n] ed., *Yorkshire Writers: Richard Rolle of Hampole and his Followers* (London, 1896), II, xxx: "Mundi amatores scire possunt verba vel carmina nostrarum cantionum, non autem cantica nostrorum carminium."

XUM

regards alcohol with a horror as obsessive as his former craving, Joyce could never be indifferent to religion. He fought it all his life, as for some years he fought a tendency to drink too much, and for essentially the same reason. The slogan " Guinness is good for you " rings throughout *Finnegans Wake*, always in the same ironical tone as do certain formulas of piety, " Hail, Mary, full of grace," " Holy Mary, Mother of God," " The Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost," " Matthew, Mark, Luke and John," and Augustine's joyful cry of amazement, " O felix culpa! " The mystical consciousness, says William James, like the drunken consciousness, rises above " the cold facts and dry criticisms of the sober hour. Sobriety diminishes, discriminates, and says no; drunkenness expands, unites, and says yes." [17] Stephen's conversation was full of cold facts and dry criticisms because Joyce needed them. They were an antidote not only to his companions' muddleheadedness but to his own mystical tendencies. Every writer, in order to compose in tranquillity, must get above his material, diminish it, discriminate, and say no; for Joyce especially this was an absolute necessity, since when he worked he consciously imitated Augustine's God.

The side of his aesthetic that he got from Aquinas emphasized the irrelevance of non-artistic standards in judging works of art; the side that he got from Augustine emphasized the irrelevance of non-artistic standards in creating works of art. From Aquinas he learned to see, through the accidents of sound and shape and color (*Portrait* 242), the formal relations (241) which are " the essence of beauty " (205). From Augustine he learned not to distort such relations by bending them to human requirements, political, moral or emotional. Just as Augustine denies that God can be understood in terms of human morality, so Stephen denies that art can be either created or understood in terms of values other than its own. " Our flesh shrinks from what it dreads and responds to the stimulus of what it desires by a purely reflex action of the nervous system. . . . Beauty expressed by the artist cannot awaken in us an emotion which is kinetic or a sensation which is purely physical. It awakens, or ought to awaken, or induces, or ought to induce,

[17] William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York, Modern Library, n. d.), pp. 377-378.

an esthetic stasis, an ideal pity or an ideal terror " (241). The ideal is almost mathematical in its purity. The highest form of art, the dramatic, is not merely a reproduction of life, but " life purified and reprojected from the human imagination " (252), the function of the imagination being to work the raw material of life into " the most satisfying relations of the sensible " and " of the intelligible " (243). The most important words here are " purified " and " ideal." They are the keys to Joyce's intention. Stephen is careful to distinguish between the uses of words " in the literary tradition," which has nothing to do with current practicalities, and " in the marketplace " (219, 250); in the marketplace their purity of meaning is compromised by the immediate human context—when the word *detain* is adapted to the practical considerations of the moment it loses something of its essential or ideal meaning (219), and the word *beauty* as used in the marketplace loses its " wider sense " (250). The uses of the marketplace, that is to say, are rough and inaccurate, and therefore unsuited to the requirements of art. The dean of studies uses the vague language of the marketplace, calling a tundish a funnel, and Stephen makes bold to correct him (219-220, 297). A tundish is a particular kind of funnel; when Stephen, to make himself understood, has to use the merely generic term, he does so reluctantly. Call this pedantry if you will. He takes unfavorable notice of Cranly's using the word " eke " for " e'en " (238, 281), is irritated when McCann calls him " a reactionary " because he will not sign a resolution for universal peace sponsored by the Czar of Russia (231), and is disheartened by the " sour smelling " question, " What then is your point of view? " (291). In one of his early book reviews Joyce chided an author who used the word " certainty " for " certitude." [18] Stephen too, requiring precision of thought and speech, cultivates it in himself, for if he is to purify life he must have a pure medium. He must divorce his speech from the common speech of men. He must be able to report their speech accurately in all its inaccuracy, but if he is to do anything more, if he is to express beauty from such " sluggish matter " (196), such " lumps of earth " (221), " the

[18] Stanislaus Joyce and Ellsworth Mason eds., *The Early Joyce: The Book Reviews, 1902-1903* (Colorado Springs, Colo., 1955), p. 15.

gross earth or what it brings forth " (242), " the daily bread of experience " (260), " the reality of existence " (299), he must command a fine instrument, " a lucid supple periodic prose " (194). The beauty of literature thus inheres not in the material but in the art of writing; what Stephen chiefly likes about words is " the poise and balance of the period itself," and what he most enjoys about writing is not " the reflection of the glowing sensible world through the prism of a language manycoloured and richly storied," not language's " associations of legend and colour," not even his own " inner world of individual emotions "—not any subject matter—but the contemplation of the inner world " mirrored perfectly ": the contemplation of his own artistry (193-194). The opening chapter of Genesis is punctuated with the joyful refrain, " And God saw that it was good." Augustine's whole conception of God as artist is a development of that theme, and Joyce's conception of drama as the highest form of literature follows Augustine very closely.

Literature, says Stephen, is " the highest and most spiritual form of art." Even in its simplest form, the " rhythmical cry " that constitutes a lyric expressing an instant of emotion, the artist begins to rise above himself, since he is " more conscious of the instant of emotion than of himself as feeling emotion " (251). This is a fair description of the *Portrait*, an essentially lyrical utterance, though, as Stephen admits, the forms are often blended and confused. From the lyric emerges the simplest form of the epic, in which " the narrative is no longer purely personal," since " the personality of the artist passes into the narration itself " in which the characters and the action are bathed as in " a vital sea." This is a fair description of *Ulysses*. The narrative is no longer purely personal, since the author, though he is the central character, is no longer the only character. Being involved with others, he necessarily regards them with interest and thereby attains a greater distance from himself. In the *Portrait* the other characters serve merely as background for Stephen; they are seen only through his eyes, and they talk only that he may reply or react; there is no scene in which he is not the central figure. *Ulysses* is a different matter. Here the artist is concerned primarily with art and only incidentally with his personal emotions. He achieves the

dramatic form, however, only when he can develop a story independently of his own feelings and attitudes; when, regarding life like Stephen Hero with a " remorseless lack of sentiment for himself no less than for others " (151), he can use characters, including himself, for purely artistic purposes as if they were so many syllables; when he can therefore endow them with such independent life that they can work out their history—however preordained by him—in accordance with their own natures and, as far as they are concerned, by their own free will.[19] At this stage, says Stephen in the *Portrait*, " the personality of the artist . . . refines itself out of existence." Thus life is purified and reprojected from an imagination as free as a mathematician's, and " the mystery of esthetic like that of material creation is accomplished." The author, like God, is completely detached, " invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent " (252). The final clause, however, " paring his fingernails," is a giveaway (doubtless intentional) of both Stephen and Joyce. A person who is really indifferent has no need for such a self-conscious pantomime of indifference. That is a fair description of *Finnegans Wake*.

In the *Portrait* Stephen does not quite claim to be God; he calls himself rather " the priest of the eternal imagination " (260); on the beach, after having decided not to join the Jesuits, he discovers the one God he can serve, art: the art of using language to express the meaning of life—and to create meaning —in works whose beauty is a matter of their perfect efficacy (190-201). The principle is illustrated in the Telemachus and Eumaeus episodes of *Ulysses*. When Stephen composes the phrase, " White breast of the dim sea," what interests and pleases him is not so much the sea as the phrase itself and his own activity as poet: " The twining stresses, two by two. A hand plucking the harpstrings merging their twining chords. Wavewhite wedded words shimmering on the dim tide " (11). This is the work of a linguistic genius who, like Augustine, thinks of poetry chiefly in terms of its musical qualities. Joyce, however, recognizes the limitations of that view. When Bloom, passing a group of Italians, is charmed by the sound of their

[19] For an orthodox resolution of the conflict between God's foreknowledge and man's free will, cf. *Enchiridion* XXX, CIV, CV (Migne, *P. L.*, XL, 246 [C]-247 [B], 281 [B-D]).

speech—" it is so melodious and full "—Stephen wearily informs him that they are " haggling over money " (606). Yet Bloom is not deluded until he devalues his own experience by saying, " It may be only the southern glamour that surrounds it." His naive first impression was right: animated speech has a beauty of its own, regardless of content or vocabulary, and certainly " *Putanna madonna, che ci dia i quattrini!* " (605) for all its obscene irreverence is as musical as " White breast of the dim sea." Yet Stephen is right too, for the content is certainly offensive and if we perceive it we cannot honestly ignore it. Joyce, however, being above Stephen, Bloom and the quarreling Italians, uses the ludicrous unlovely incident to create a complex beauty, that artistic beauty which Stephen calls in the *Portrait* the radiance of truth (243, 250)—the revelation of the inner and outer relations of things and thus of their meaning. This does not shine from the Italians' speech or from anything that Bloom or Stephen says about it; there is little natural beauty in any one of these elements, but Joyce creates artistic beauty from them by showing us the truth of which they are an epiphany and by making us admire the skill with which he shows it. Bloom's pitifully dull remark about Southern glamour, for example, is so justly recorded that the contemplation of the recording gives us an intellectual pleasure of the aesthetic kind. Thus, just as God accomplishes His good work through man's bad works, so the priest of the imagination creates beauty from ugly materials—or rather, as Stephen would say, expresses the beauty he can see in their relations. There is thus an essentially romantic attitude behind all Joyce's work, however unromantic the details may seem, and an essentially Augustinian acceptance of things as they are. Augustine came to acceptance through religion, Joyce through art. One is perhaps as evil as the other.

The artist's task, however, is more difficult, for he must at all times be clearheaded about his work, and the priestly imagination is liable to a peculiarly seductive kind of doublethink. The priest is a vicar, a vicarious God, so that even though he denies that he is God he can hardly help acting as if he were. However long the chain of command may be, still the Pope is God's vicar and the village priest acts for him; the village priest, no less than the Pope, can hardly permit himself to be gainsaid,

and is therefore liable to regard all who disagree with him in anything as enemies of God. Joyce's self-confidence seems to have been of this kind. Those who disagreed with him he tended to consider enemies of art. He was always a man of faith; as an adult he lived by the truth of art as intensely as he had formerly lived by the truth of the Catholic religion. In the *Portrait* Stephen deplores a girl's preferring the false priest of Catholicism, who merely goes through the motions of communion with the divine, to himself, in whom divinity lives although as yet there are no outward signs of it. What he deplores in her is lack of faith, lack of that spiritual vision which would have enabled her to make a better choice. He frankly regards himself as one of the elect of his race, in betraying whom the mocker Moynihan (a forerunner of Buck Mulligan) betrays the whole race (226). In *Ulysses* he deplores the old milkwoman's preferring Mulligan to himself (16), and Joyce implies that the barmaids at the Ormond are equally blind in preferring the mocker Boylan, in whom there is no truth, to the good Bloom, who in his fallen condition is yet also a man of faith (256, 262). In *Finnegans Wake* Shem "lifts the lifewand and the dumb speak" (195), but the Rainbow Girls and the Leapyear Girls have no use for him; they flock around Shaun, though—or because—"he points the deathbone and the quick are still" (193, 595). This is one of the major themes of Joyce's work as a whole: the tendency of "ordinary people," as Stephen Hero says, to commit "moral suicide" (200-201) or to reveal the fact that they are already dead by choosing Barrabas instead of God. "No honourable and sincere man," says Stephen to the nationalists in the *Portrait*, "has given up to you his life and his youth and his affections . . . but you sold him to the enemy or failed him in need or reviled him and left him for another. And you invite me to be one of you. I'd see you damned first" (237-238). He himself does not fear to be "spurned for another" (292. He thus explicitly rejects not the role of savior but the role of one who kills the savior. His attitude is close to that of God in the *Enchiridion*, who willingly sees the majority of men damned because it is their nature to be damned.[20]

[20] *Enchiridion* XCIX (Migne, *P. L.*, XL, 278 [D]): "Videt enim, si capit,

But God is the savior too—of those who by His own decree have natures capable of being saved. Stephen likewise, as artist, hopes to save from spiritual death those who are capable of being quickened by his art: " How could he hit their conscience or how cast his shadow over the imaginations of their daughters, before their squires begat upon them, that they might breed a race less ignoble than their own? " (280). The answer Joyce proposed can be found in his youthful criticism and in all his works: the art itself must create its audience—must create those who can respond to it and be saved. Not the majority, of course, who have no desire to rise any higher than they must, but the elect, who by their aspiration cut themselves off from the majority. The artist who ministers to and in part creates aspiration is not quite God, but his activity is godlike. He makes the most difficult of all human choices. He risks cutting himself off from all human understanding, for a purpose which may very well turn out to be of no consequence after all. Joyce made that hard decision. So great was his faith in art, he was willing to risk damnation for it. In the *Portrait* Stephen tells Cranly, " I am not afraid to make a mistake, even a great mistake, a lifelong mistake and perhaps as long as eternity too." To Cranly's question if he would be willing to stand " quite alone . . . separate from all others " and " to have not even one friend," he replies, " I will take the risk " (292). Joyce suffered intensely from his isolation, but contrived to create beauty from it: the picture of Shem in *Finnegans Wake* is a nightmare of loneliness (169-187), but the author looks down and describes it with godlike levity and joy. He is never completely detached, because he can never quite forget that he is being detached, and because after all he is not without human passion. His own voice can be heard in Anna Livia's cry, " A hundred cares, a tithe of troubles and is there one who understands me? " (627); he knows that in eternity not only his own work but all

universum genus humanum tam justo judicio divino in apostatica radice damnatum, ut etiamsi nullus inde liberaretur, nemo recte posset Dei vituperare justitiam; et qui liberantur, sic opportuisse liberari, ut ex pluribus non liberatis, atque in damnatione justissima derelictis, ostenderetur quid meruisset universa conspersio, et quo etiam istos debitum judicium Dei duceret, nisi eis indebita misericordia subveniret: ut volentium de suis meritis gloriari, *omne os obstruatur* (Romans 3: 19); et *qui gloriatur, in Domino glorietur*."

life, all variety, all joy and all creation will be drowned in the conformity of death and total darkness; nevertheless he will continue to lift the lifewand that the dumb may sing the song of the universe

> Till tree from tree, tree among trees, tree over tree become stone to stone, stone between stones, stone under stone for ever (259).

That is perhaps as near to the purely intellectual joy of God as man can come.

Pennsylvania State University

XUM

ART AND FREEDOM: THE AESTHETIC OF *ULYSSES*

BY S. L. GOLDBERG

The aesthetic theory Stephen Dedalus propounds in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is itself a dramatic illumination of his ideals and attitudes. His aim is to preserve art from emotions and purposes that would disturb it, and so he defines art in terms of beauty and the aesthetic emotion proper to it—a stasis of spiritual contemplation in which the " physical " or " kinetic " emotions of desire and loathing have no part. In so far as a work of art is beautiful—that is, in so far as it is capable of a process of aesthetic apprehension culminating in this stasis—it is good. As it stands, the theory is open to a number of objections. For one thing, it fails to distinguish between natural beauty and aesthetic beauty, but this failure is only part of a deeper fault. In concentrating on the autonomy of art, its freedom from the laws and purposes of ordinary life, its unique and irreducible character, Stephen neglects the other aspect of its paradoxical nature—its meaningfulness, its relationships (however they may be expressed) with what lies outside it: the life open to all men. On the theory in the *Portrait* we could not distinguish between the levels of experience expressed in works of art. A song and a tragedy may each possess beauty, may each be capable of " aesthetic apprehension," but beyond that Stephen's theory can say nothing. In the end, it expresses—subtly but inevitably —Stephen's own Aestheticism.

In the library chapter of *Ulysses* (" Scylla and Charybdis ") Stephen puts forward another theory—this time in terms of *Hamlet*. Again the argument is based on an Aristotelian and Scholastic foundation; again it is concerned with a theory of apprehension or knowledge; but apart from that the difference between the two theories is fundamental. Stephen himself has developed in the meantime. He has moved on to consider those

questions he had deliberately ignored in the *Portrait* for want of experience—artistic conception and artistic gestation. There, his failure to take account of these had damaged his whole theory; now the lack is made good. For in his discussion of Shakespeare and *Hamlet* he also discusses the "matter" of art, the conditions under which it is produced, and the relations of the artist to his art. He restores art to its context in experience, and so restores meaningfulness and truth to art; the stasis of the artist's soul and the stasis of his art are meaningfully linked.

If Stephen's theory is something of a parody of Shakespearian commentaries it is also something deeper. Continually during the course of it his reflections indicate how much he feels the connexion with himself: "Elizabethan London lay as far from Stratford as corupt Paris lies from virgin Dublin" (186).[1] He is not seeking mere biographical parallels. What urges him is the need for explanation and understanding of his own situation. His theory is about Shakespeare but it is also about himself, and all other artists, too. It is, as it were, a Vicchian interpretation of the myth of Shakespeare, the particular hero in whose story may be found the universal laws that hold for all his type, in whose deeds may be found a universal wisdom. Even though Stephen's theory seems a mere *tour de force* to his audience, it is a task of self-understanding imposed on him by necessity:

> What the hell are you driving at?
> I know. Shut up. Blast you! I have reasons.
> *Amplius. Adhuc. Iterum. Postea.*
> Are you condemned to do this? (205)

The answer to this unspoken question is clearly, yes. The theory itself explains the necessity. When he is challenged, Stephen promptly says he does not believe it, but the reply comes glibly. His silent reflections reveal more than his protective speech—"I believe, O Lord, help my unbelief" (211).

[1] In this and other references below, I have simply given the page numbers of the following editions or impressions: *Ulysses*, Random House ed., N. Y., 1934; *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, London, 1942; *Stephen Hero*, London, 1948; Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*, translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 22 vols., London, n. d.; Aristotle's works as translated under the editorship of W. D. Ross, 12 vols., Oxford, 1928-52.

Even if his theory is false in fact it is nevertheless, like the story of Odysseus, metaphysically true—" if we consider the matter well," says Vico, " poetic truth is metaphysical truth, and physical truth which is not in conformity with it should be considered false." [2] The case of *Hamlet* lies at the heart of *Ulysses*, and Stephen's argument about it as a work of art explains why. Although the aesthetic theory here is as dramatically " placed " as that in the *Portrait*, it is not as an ironic comment upon the action but as its intellectual principle.

The problem of the " matter " of art is introduced very early in the chapter. Russell cuts across the desultory conversation about *Hamlet*:

—All these questions are purely academic, Russell oracled out of his shadow. I mean, whether Hamlet is Shakespeare or James I or Essex. Clergymen's discussions of the historicity of Jesus. Art has to reveal to us ideas, formless spiritual essences. The supreme question about a work of art is out of how deep a life does it spring. The painting of Gustave Moreau is the painting of ideas. The deepest poetry of Shelley, the words of Hamlet bring our minds into contact with the eternal wisdom, Plato's world of ideas. All the rest is the speculation of schoolboys for schoolboys. (183)

It is the " dreams and visions of a peasant's heart " that interest Russell; he is the Platonic Charybdis of the chapter to the Aristotelianism and Scholasticism of Stephen.[3] Stephen does not contradict Russell explicitly or directly. His unspoken rejoinder is his real answer:

Unsheathe your dagger definitions. Horseness is the whatness of allhorse. Streams of tendency and eons they worship. God: noise in the street: very peripatetic. Space: what you damn well have to see. Through spaces smaller than red globules of man's blood they creepycrawl after Blake's buttocks into eternity of which this vegetable world is but a shadow. Hold to the now, the here, through which all future plunges to the past. (184)

In other words, it is a disagreement about the substance of art. To Russell art is a direct communication with a world more real than this, the world of forms. Since the flesh and blood

[2] *The New Science*, translated by Thomas Goddard Bergin & Max Harold Fisch, Cornell Univ. Press, N. Y., 1948, para. 205, p. 66.

[3] Platonism is not very articulately represented by Russell in this chapter, but it is, I believe, an important aspect of the structure of the book. However, this must be reserved for separate treatment.

with which the artist may clothe his ideas are not necessary, they are therefore irrelevant to his main concerns. The aim of art is to bring the mind of the reader also into communication with the world of ideas, and this is done by a direct revelation of that world. The artist is only a medium, a middleman through whom the ideas may reach the minds of other men. The nature of the artist, his limitations, his name, are all irrelevant since these play no essential part in his artistic function. He is a kind of anonymous Aeolian lyre, visited by an inspiration he cannot understand but whose direction he must obey.

Much of this may seem to put words into Russell's mouth, but it is impossible not to recall the essay on " Art and Life " in *Stephen Hero* where Stephen, in adopting Shelley's views on the visionary role of the imagination—a romanticism that applied to the social function of art—had insisted at the same time on the discipline of the " classical temper," a naturalistic technique, a concern for the here and the now. Once again, after disappearing from the *Portrait,* where the whole tendency of the argument is to preserve art from subservience to alien " Realities," this line of thought appears in *Ulysses,* but in a more subtle and far-reaching form. Stephen's objections to " Platonism " now go further than to mere questions of style; they involve a different philosophical outlook. His earlier formula—that the artist is a " mediator between the world of his experience and the world of his dreams "—expresses something of his objection to Russell, but it is inadequate for all that he means. In the discussion on Shakespeare and *Hamlet* he attempts to make his deeper meaning clear—mainly to himself.

The course his argument takes is not designed to make the essentials stand out; it is dramatically presented, and we realize that the central points of the argument strikes too close to Stephen's self for him to have given them open expression. In following the argument, therefore, we have to re-arrange it and supply the connexions between conclusions Stephen merely asserts. The real clues are his unspoken reflections, the odd phrases from Aristotle or Aquinas that indicate the drift of his thought. If once we catch that drift, however, his argument leads from this first disagreement with Russell to the nature

of artistic freedom. And like a good Aristotelian, he drops the phrase about the artist's dreams. He assumes that the world the artist knows is the world of his experience—the macrocosm outside, and the microcosm within. And like a good Aristotelian again, he argues that the artist himself *is* his world, that macrocosm and microcosm are for the artist one and the same. The artist himself stands at the centre of Stephen's theory; art is for him personal expression and objective (though not necessarily representational) truth.

For Aquinas, as for Aristotle, man can have no direct intuition of forms or essences. He cannot know in the manner of God and the angels, whose knowledge is a direct apprehension of the proper natures (or quiddities) of things. Man forms concepts, reaches true knowledge of essences, only by the aid of his one direct contact with reality—his senses. The foundation of this theory of knowledge, and the foundation of Stephen's own treatment of aesthetic apprehension in the *Portrait,* is the principle, *Nihil est in intellectu nisi prius fuerit in sensu.* The first stage of human apprehension is the distinguishing and organizing of sense-impressions by the sensitive soul, the apprehension of the object as a sensible thing, " selfbounded and selfcontained," as Stephen magniloquently puts it, " upon the immeasurable background of space or time which is not it " (*Portrait,* 241). The sensible aspect of the object, *species sensibilis,* is transformed by the mind so that it may become capable of conceptual apprehension, intelligible. In its continual quest for knowledge of essences, the mind analyses and abstracts from the sensible aspect the intelligible structure of the object: the *intellectus agens,* to use the Scholastic terminology, discovers the *species intelligibilis.* This roughly corresponds to the second phase of aesthetic apprehension as Stephen describes it—the discovery of the formal or conceptual aspects of the object. The whole act of knowledge concludes when the *intellectus possibilis*—the mind as a potentiality of knowing all things—taking possession of the *species intelligibilis* and apprehending the nature of the object, expresses its knowledge in a concept and communicates its understanding to others. Every concept that the mind judges as true—i. e. as exhibiting to the mind's self-conscious scrutiny a conformity between itself and the object—is thus what Stephen calls an

XUM

" epiphany "—" a sudden spiritual manifestation " of the object. Art, in so far as it records such epiphanies, expresses the artist's knowledge of reality.

Stephen's disagreement with Russell clearly goes deeper than to mere matters of style. He is maintaining that the particulars of experience can no more be ignored by the artist than by other men, for the mind apprehends truth only through contact with them. The forms of things can be known only in and through their sensible aspects. As Aquinas puts it,

> the proper object of the human intellect, which is united to a body, is a quiddity or nature existing in corporeal matter; and through such natures of visible things it rises to a certain knowledge of things invisible. . . . For the intellect to understand actually its proper object, it must of necessity turn to the phantasms [i. e. images retained by the imagination and memory] in order to perceive the universal nature existing in the individual. But if the proper object of our intellect were a separate form; or if, as the Platonists say, the natures of sensible things subsisted apart from the individual; there would be no need for the intellect to turn to the phantasms whenever it understands. (Ia, lxxxiv, 7)

The artist can have no direct knowledge of " spiritual essences," no intuition of the meaning of things apart from the things themselves. The world of here and now is itself the only door to its meaning. Stephen does not deny that the artist seeks to know and record the essential natures of things; in this respect his argument is perhaps closer to that in *Stephen Hero* than that in the *Portrait.* His difference with Russell is about what epiphanies are, and so about the conditions under which they may be apprehended and reproduced in art. The contemplative philosopher strives to reach the rare, purely intellectual vision of the forms and principles of reality abstracted from all sensible particulars. But even if the artist—like all men—naturally strives to the same end, he cannot as artist neglect the very nature and material of his art. The knowledge he requires is not of abstractions but of things, of individuals. It is because he realizes this that Stephen had defined art in the *Portrait* as the disposition of " *sensible* and intelligible matter " and had described it as the expression " from sound and shape and colour which are the prison gates of our soul, [of] an image of the beauty we have come to understand " (235). The artist tries to apprehend the intelligible natures of things—epiphanies

XUM

—but not what Russell calls "*formless* spiritual essences." As a man he cannot think without recourse to images of sense; as an artist, endeavouring to impart knowledge of individual things and people, he is especially bound to use "sensible matter" to convey his "intelligible matter." The artist is like the lover; both must descend to particulars

> Which sense may reach and apprehend,
> Else a great Prince in prison lies.

Russell's attitude violates at once the nature of man and the nature of art. No one—and especially no artist—can rely on communications relayed through the "yogibogeybox."

But Stephen carries the argument further—from the nature of human knowledge in general to a special act of knowledge: knowledge of oneself. And this brings us not only to the reasons for his curious theory of *Hamlet* but also to the reasons why the argument is central to *Ulysses*. The clue to Stephen's direction is his unspoken reflection, which echoes his thoughts during the history lesson he had given earlier in the morning—"But I, entelechy, form of forms, am I by memory because under everchanging forms" (187:26-7).[4]

For Aristotle and his Scholastic followers, knowledge is the human soul in act, a realization of a potency, a perfecting. Man is distinguished from other creatures by the nature of his form or soul. In him it includes but transcends the sensitive soul of the animal; he alone is distinguished by his mind or intellect, his rational soul. Like all material things and creatures, he is composed of matter and form. To say that a thing is animate is to say that its matter is more highly informed than that of an inanimate thing. Man is so highly informed that he is self-determining. His soul—of a "slow and dark birth," as Stephen puts it in the *Portrait*, "more mysterious than the birth of the body"—is the principle of his individual unity as a person. But whereas the sensitive soul of an animal can act only through the physical organs of the animal, which has no other life than that of the senses and appetites, the rational soul of man acts without physical means. His intellect, although

[4] Stuart Gilbert (*James Joyce's Ulysses*, London, 1952, p. 48) takes this as an allusion to Buddhism and reincarnation. This may be so, but the more obvious reference is surely to Aristotle.

it needs the senses to provide it with the objects of its operation —i. e. the objects of its knowledge or understanding—itself operates without their aid. It knows its objects as intelligibles. Moreover, since it is regarded as standing to its knowledge in the relation of potency to act, it may be said to possess an infinite capacity for knowledge of the material universe. Its proper end is knowledge; it is the principle of the human being; in the act of knowledge the being fulfils itself—this is the heart of its life. To start with, of course, it knows nothing—it is like a blank page on which nothing is as yet written but on which is potentially written everything. The potentiality of the soul is successively actuated, progressively fulfilled in the achievement of knowledge. The record of our acts of understanding would be the record of the fulfilments of our soul. A complete biography would have to include acts of perception perhaps, and certainly acts of will, habits, and the like, but since the soul is most fully actuated in knowledge of truth it is acts of knowledge that form the most important aspect of a man's life.

On this view knowledge is an activity that ends in a kind of possession. The mind reaches out and takes into its own life the form of the thing known, and in doing so it takes on that form itself. It becomes the form of the object, as it were. The subject and object are united in a single reality, a single form, which is at once the actualization of the object-as-knowable and of the subject-as-knower. The object cannot be known nor can the subject know except in relation to each other; the unity they achieve in the form of the object is the actual knowledge. Since the mind as *intellectus possibilis* is capable of becoming all the forms in the material universe and in so doing actualizing its own potentialities, it may be said to be the form of forms. As Aristotle puts it, the soul

> is in a way all existing things; for existing things are either sensible or thinkable, and knowledge is in a way what is knowable, and sensation is in a way what is sensible: in *what* way we must inquire.
>
> Knowledge and sensation are divided to correspond with the realities, potential knowledge and sensation answering to potentialities, actual knowledge and sensation to actualities. Within the soul the faculties of knowledge and sensation are *potentially* these objects, the one what is knowable, the other what is sensible. They must be either the things themselves or their forms. The former

alternative is of course impossible: it is not the stone which is present in the soul but its form.

> It follows that the soul is analogous to the hand; for as the hand is a tool of tools, so the mind is the form of forms and sense the form of sensible things. (*De Anima,* 431^b-432^a)

What is known by the intellect is not the complete being of the object, of course, but only its abstracted form. The intellect cannot know the form, again, without the phantasms of sense to aid it. What Aristotle says here must be read with the qualification that in the object itself the form is embodied in matter, that it is also a sensible object.

It is this passage that Stephen recalls in his reflections. During the history lesson earlier in the day he had mused on time as the actualizing of the potential or possible—a thought that recurs in the library scene too (191). He had gone on to recall the moment in his own past when he sat reading in a Paris library, all the world he was to meet in the future lying in the darkness of his soul's potentiality—

> in my mind's darkness a sloth of the underworld, reluctant, shy of brightness, shifting her dragon scaly folds. Thought is the thought of thought. Tranquil brightness. The soul is in a manner all that is: the soul is the form of forms. Tranquility sudden, vast, candescent: form of forms. (26-7)

The idea is clear enough even in Aristotelian terms: a man's experience actualizes the potentialities of his soul as it joins with and takes on the forms of all the successive objects he comes to know. The development of the soul is thus the sequence of the epiphanies it discovers.

When he applies this line of thought to Shakespeare, Stephen begins, despite the unusual conclusions he draws out of his dialectical hat, with little more than a restatement of a commonplace, even if it is a restatement modified by his reading of Aristotle and Aquinas. We might put his point as that the artist's self contains the forms or quiddities that he portrays in art, or that an artist's material is the activity of his own soul; we might equally say that a man understands only what he has a capacity to understand, or that a Falstaff or an Ivan Karamazov represents both a form (or epiphany) of the artist's world and also something in himself. Thus Shakespeare's plays

XUM

represent the world in which he lived—"All events brought grist to his mill" (202)—and also Shakespeare himself:

> He found in the world without as actual what was in his world within as possible. Maeterlinck says: *If Socrates leave his house today he will find the sage seated on his doorsteps. If Judas go forth tonight it is to Judas his steps will tend.* Every life is many days, day after day. We walk through ourselves, meeting robbers, ghosts, giants, old men, young men, wives, widows, brothers-in-love. But always meeting ourselves. (210)

Thus Shakespeare is all his characters, "he is all in all," and being a man of genius able to take advantage of his experience, he "makes no mistakes": "his errors are volitional and are the portals of discovery" (188). Stephen's magniloquent manner should not blind us to the fact that he has evidently put a good deal of thought into his theory, and that it is a serious attempt to explain the relationship between the artist, his world, and his art. And in order to carry the argument to the desired conclusion Stephen turns to the artist's understanding of his self.

Self-knowledge to the Scholastic philosopher is interesting only as one case of knowledge in general. The intellect can know itself only in the way it knows other things—by turning to the material and sensible. The intellect "knows itself therefore only to the extent that it passes from potency to act, under the influence of the species which the light of the active intellect [i.e. the *intellectus agens*] abstracts from sensible things. . . . Our soul attains to the knowledge of itself only in the measure in which it apprehends other things."[5] The mind first knows the natures of material things, then may come to know the act by which those natures are known, and "through the act," says Aquinas, "the intellect itself is known, the perfection of which is this act of understanding" (Ia, lxxxvii, 3). The act of self-knowledge completes the process, as it were. But to the philosopher knowledge of the self is restricted to the conceptual aspect. The intellect cannot think the particular matter in which the form is embodied. It cannot know this table, or Shakespeare, but only the essential nature of this table so abstracted and generalized that it is the nature of all tables, or of Shakespeare so abstracted that it is the

[5] E. Gilson, *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. E. Bullough, Camb., 1929, p. 254.

XUM

nature of all men. Similarly, self-knowledge, in the strict sense of the intellect's apprehension of its own nature, is limited to an abstract concept of what is shared by all intellects. It is this that Aristotle and Aquinas mean when they argue that the intellect's knowledge of the principles of its own activity completes its knowledge. The apprehension of the particular table, Shakespeare, our individual selves, requires sense perception as well as intellectual understanding. In each case the form is embodied in matter. Knowledge of the individual therefore requires a combination of the intellectual and the sensible or imaginative powers. Self-knowledge in this sense is what interests Stephen—knowledge of the individual self to be discovered in one's own acts and thoughts. " Self-understanding " is perhaps a better term: it is knowledge not of the pure form of the object but of its form-in-matter that is the province of the artist. Thus an autobiography rather than a treatise on man records the soul's understanding of itself as it has performed acts of knowledge in the past, or to put it another way, of itself as it has been successively fulfilled in its acts of knowledge, in their sequence up to the point at which they are themselves understood. This description may seem unnecessarily complicated, but it is one way of describing the kind of self-knowledge in *The Prelude,* for example, or *The Education of Henry Adams,* perhaps, or—to take the case most relevant here—*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.* Such books are more than simple autobiography—the past is not merely reported, but formed by the imagination; and any aesthetic theory that seeks to explain and justify this process must concern itself above all with the artist's recollection and self-development.

A list or diary of the epiphanies a man discovers, in the order he apprehends them, is a record of the successive fulfilments of his soul as well as a record of the knowledge upon which he acts and has acted in the past. If the list were to begin in earliest childhood it would at first record simple acts of understanding and correspondingly unreflective actions, since it is the extent of our understanding that enables us to reflect on ends and means and to make conscious choices. As the list extended, the acts of understanding would become more complex—i. e. the epiphanies more subtle and complex—and the

actions more conscious and deliberate. The individual's arrival at maturity may be understood as the progression of his understanding to the point where instead of regarding the things he perceives and knows in "kinetic" terms—as objects of desire or repulsion, coloured by his own feelings and emotions—and consequently acting more or less unreflectingly, he is able to stand aside from himself, as it were, and see the world more objectively. Being able to understand his own relations with the world, he is able to distinguish his kinetic perception of things from things as they are, and able therefore to act with a greater deliberateness. In this sense, too, the act of self-knowledge may be said to complete a process. For what the "standing aside" consists in is the realization of the pattern embodied in past knowledge and actions. It is the act that enables a man to make an autobiography out of a diary. It is to understand relationships that could not have been understood in any past act of understanding, to understand more fully what was known only partially, to see the limitations of past knowledge, to find the causal sequence in the succession of apprehended epiphanies, and to see the self extending backward in time, continuously if obscurely fulfilled, and forward, awaiting the actualizing of still unfathomed potentiality.

In the *Portrait* Joyce presents the sequence of Stephen's acts of understanding and his increasingly deliberate actions, but not to the point where Stephen reaches the maturity at which he could grasp and present this sequence himself. At the end of the book Stephen is still in a kinetic relation to the world—and he is meant to remain so even in *Ulysses*: Bloom listens to Stephen's "Pisgah Sight of Palestine," "by which potential narration was realized and kinetic temperament relieved" (669). He has not yet reached the point at which he knows enough about his world or himself to write objectively about either—which means, of course, about both as they have united in his experience. Joyce, as the title implies, had reached this point, though not when he wrote *Stephen Hero*. The difference between the two books is the degree of self-understanding they exhibit or, to put it in other terms, the degree of objectivity the author has achieved. Stephen sees something of this himself in the *Portrait*. His distinction between artistic "forms" is a distinction of degrees of objectivity or degrees of self-under-

standing. The "lyrical" is the "simplest verbal vesture of an instant of emotion," in which the artist is in a fully kinetic relation to the world, "more conscious of the instant of emotion than of himself as feeling emotion." The "epical" develops from this. The narrative is no longer "purely personal"; the author begins to distinguish between himself and his art, and his personality "passes into the narration itself, flowing round and round the persons and the action like a vital sea." The progress to objectivity is complete with the "dramatic." The artist is now capable of distinguishing and so separating his personality from his narration; he may refine his personality "out of existence." An impersonal, objective art stands free from kinetic stresses:

the artist, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails. (*Portrait*, 244-5)

It is a measure of Stephen's development between the *Portrait* and *Ulysses* that in the former he realized that he must free himself from the demands of family, country and religion in order to become an artist, and in the latter that he must also achieve the objectivity of vision necessary for the highest art—and that to do this he must understand himself. Seeking a pattern of the artist's necessities in Shakespeare, he takes *Hamlet* as the play in which Shakespeare records his self-understanding. His theory about it is his explanation of why Shakespeare had to write it—and why he himself will have to do the same in another form. But only in the future. Time is also necessary: we may not be able to understand our present actions or the limitations of the knowledge on which they are based by tomorrow, nor perhaps even in a year's time, but sooner or later the opportunity will arrive.

As we, or mother Dana, weave and unweave our bodies, Stephen said, from day to day, their molecules shuttled to and fro, so does the artist weave and unweave his image. And as the mole on my right breast is where it was when I was born, though all my body has been woven of new stuff time after time, so through the ghost of the unquiet father the image of the unliving son looks forth. In the intense instant of imagination, when the mind, Shelley says, is a fading coal that which I was is that which I am and that which in possibility I may come to be. So in the future, the sister of the

past, I may see myself as I sit here now but by reflection from that which then I shall be. (192)

The self one discovers in past epiphanies and actions is also an epiphany, a quiddity that exists in and gives form to all its sensible manifestations. Joyce sees himself and his experience objectively from the point at which he writes the *Portrait* and, we must add, *Ulysses*; Shakespeare from the point at which he wrote *Hamlet*. Both Stephen and Hamlet are introspective, *lisant au livre de lui-même*,[6] trying vainly to understand themselves before the time is ripe. For that very reason, however, they cannot be identified with the author whose knowledge is so much greater that he can present with complete objectivity his character (personal *and* dramatic) and the world in which he moves. In the act of self-understanding the artist sees that which he is, and was, and may even guess what still lies in the darkness of his soul's potentiality.

Applied to *Hamlet*, Stephen's argument results in the view that if Shakespeare is to be identified with any character in the play it must be the older Hamlet, the Ghost, and Hamlet himself with Shakespeare's son Hamnet. On the other hand, the argument that an artist's characters are manifestations of his own soul results in the view that Shakespeare is to be identified with Hamlet too. Sabellius's heresy comes pat. The God-like self-knowledge of the artist, where knower and known are one and the same, permits the analogy with a greater relationship: the Father is His Own Son (205). Hamlet as a character has therefore a double aspect: he is Shakespeare's actual son and, being Shakespeare's creation, also Shakespeare himself—but only as a young man. So that instead of saying that Shakespeare found as actual in Hamnet what was possible in himself, we should rather say that he found in Hamnet as possible what had been actualized within himself. Hamlet is a portrait of the artist as a young man and also of the spiritual possibilities in Hamnet. Hamnet is more than a mere son of the flesh; he is also a spiritual successor, a son of the soul.

Aristotle and Aquinas agree in believing that the rational soul of man is not the result of natural generation. Aristotle's

[6] Hugh Kenner has thrown a great deal of light on this aspect of Stephen, and the parallels between *Hamlet* and the *Odyssey*, in his essay, "Joyce's *Ulysses*: Homer and Hamlet," *Essays in Criticism*, II, 1952, 85-104.

view is that it is not, like the nutritive and sensitive souls, generated by the semen, but is alone divine and comes from outside—" for no bodily activity has any connexion with the activity of reason " (*De Generatione Animalium,* 736^b). As Aquinas puts it, the intellectual soul is created by God at the end of human generation, which so creates the matter that it is able to receive this form (Ia, cxviii, 2). Dante also explains the point in a passage that Joyce almost certainly knew:

> Apri alla verità che viene il petto,
> e sappi che, sì tosto come al feto
> l' articular del cerebro è perfetto,
>
> lo Motor primo a lui si volge, lieto
> sopra tanta arte di natura, e spira
> spirito nuovo di virtù repleto,
>
> che siò trova attivo quivi tira
> in sua sustanzia, e fassi un' alma sola,
> che vive e sente, e sè in sè rigira.
>
> (*Purgatorio*, XXV, 67-78)

(Open thy breast to the truth which is coming, and know that so soon as the organisation of the brain is perfect in the embryo, the First Mover turns him to it, rejoicing over such handiwork of nature, and breathes into it a new spirit with virtue filled, which draws into its substance that which it finds active there, and [uniting with the nutritive and sensitive] becomes one single soul, that lives, and feels, and [completing its knowledge by self-knowledge] turns round upon itself.)

However tempting it would be to speculate on the exact point at which the rational soul enters, the general principle is enough to suggest that paternity may be considered in two ways—paternity of the body and paternity of the soul. Stephen is careful to make this distinction. His own father, Dedalus senior, is the parent only of his body. But where, in the usual sense of the word, the father of the soul would be God, Stephen uses the word in a more metaphorical sense: " It is a mystical estate, an apostolic succession, from only begetter to only begotten " (204-5). In Stephen's sense—the metaphor that gives form to *Ulysses* itself—paternity of the soul is a handing on of spiritual power, a succession of the spirit different and distinct from succession of the body.

In Shakespeare's case, Stephen seems to argue, the two kinds of paternity coincided. Hamnet Shakespeare was son to his

father in body, and in the figure of Hamlet son also in soul. In the play, Shakespeare himself

> is a ghost, a shadow now, the wind by Elsinore's rocks or what you will, the sea's voice, a voice heard only in the heart of him who is the substance of his shadow, the son consubstantial with the father. (194)

In his own case, Stephen sees only too well that the two do not coincide. A father is a necessary evil, he says, linked to his son only by " an instant of blind rut." Yet on the mystery of fatherhood in the spiritual sense the Church itself is founded —on the transference of a spiritual power from one man to another (205). The son is dependent on the father for this, his weakness needs the aid of that power. To be " no more a son," as Shakespeare was when he wrote *Hamlet*, means not merely that his own father was dead but that he no longer stood in spiritual need of any man. He was himself a father, spiritually mature, handing that power on to his son. All the power he had himself received, all that he would hand on, was concentrated in him:

> he was and felt himself the father of all his race, the father of his own grandfather, the father of his unborn grandson who, by the same token, never was born for nature, as Mr Magee understands her, abhors perfection. (205)

Thus the discussion about fatherhood comes back to the centre of the whole argument—the maturity of Shakespeare the artist, the spiritual power he possessed and in *Hamlet* passed on to his son. Stephen claims that we can guess at the events of Shakespeare's life, or at the main structure of it, from the evidence of the plays. What we must remember is that however true or false this claim, whatever the actual " biography " Stephen concocts, and indeed however absurdly the paradoxes of his argument are piled up, they are none of them of fundamental importance to the argument as a whole. It is easy to miss its essentials in the rather lurid accidents. The argument about the artist's knowledge and powers and the conditions necessary for the greatest art is central because it is this that concerns Stephen and Joyce himself; the story of Shakespeare's life is only a way of putting it, a myth in which a universal truth is enacted. The myth is itself important because it is

XUM

re-enacted in twentieth-century Dublin; but it is the truth, not the particular myth, that is important to Stephen.

The main point Stephen makes about Shakespeare's life is that up to the writing of *Hamlet* he was in a kinetic relation to life. He had been seduced by the " boldfaced Stratford wench " who had then been unfaithful with his own brothers, and the inevitable result was that " belief in himself [had] been untimely killed." The spiritual wound rankles, fetters his mind, " darkening even his own understanding of himself."

—The soul has been before stricken mortally, a poison poured in the porch of a sleeping ear. But those who are done to death in sleep cannot know the manner of their quell unless their Creator endow their souls with that knowledge in the life to come. The poisoning and the beast with two backs that urged it king Hamlet's ghost could not know of were he not endowed with knowledge by his creator. (194)

Only the " life to come," the maturity of self-understanding, permits Shakespeare to understand the past truly. *Hamlet* is the record of his self-knowledge and his achievement of objectivity. Yet he cannot make use of his power himself, Stephen argues; he feels, in the moment of its fulness, that he must hand it on to his son. His understanding came too late for his own life, the wound lay too deep, and the " note of banishment, banishment from the heart, banishment from home " sounds until the very end (209). Such reconciliation as he was able to effect—the love he felt for his daughter, his Marina—could not free him completely. The old note echoes when his daughter Susan, " chip of the old block," is accused of adultery. Though it was the " original sin that darkened his understanding " and " weakened his will," even the clearer understanding he achieved as an artist could not free him as a man from the pattern of actions that obsessed him. He could not achieve more than the partial freedom of his art.

It is freedom, as a man but even more as an artist, that Stephen ultimately desires—the freedom of spiritual power, the freedom of objectivity. He concludes the argument about Shakespeare; then

He laughed to free his mind from his mind's bondage. (209)

The ineffectiveness of a laugh to free him, the failure of Shake-

speare to free himself completely, the effort Stephen has made to free himself in his argument about Shakespeare, and Shakespeare's achievement of freedom in the art of *Hamlet*—all meet in the one line. The laugh and the motive for it and the argument it concludes cast reflections on each other.

The objective vision of one's experience is not a mere passive stasis of contemplation but an act. Certain conditions are necessary before it can be performed, but once a man's knowledge is complete enough, he may exercise his will and stand aside from the kinesis of life. The act frees him negatively: from the darkness of ignorance, from his former subjection to forces he did not understand. The burden of his environment, of obsessive ideas, of ruling emotions, can be shaken off if these things are known for what they are. In the act of self-understanding he may stand temporarily free of them; the mind contemplates its full content in freedom from the pressures it normally responds to. Again, the act frees positively: permits the will to act in the future, to determine the self more fully and more surely. Whether the burdens can ever be shaken off completely depends upon the man. Shakespeare could not manage it quite; Stephen can only try. The important thing for Stephen, however, is that the freedom wherein the mind is turned in contemplation upon its own experience is not only the proper aim of the artist but also lies within his power. What he is able to find in contemplation and to record in art is the measure of his genius; what he does with the further power his knowledge gives him is the measure of his will as a man. But this act is for him that which he must perform in order to write as greatly as he desires, in order to free himself of those " nets " rejected in the *Portrait,* and to awake from the " nightmare " of history (*Ulysses,* 35). The *Portrait* is Joyce's first major and necessary step as a great artist; *Ulysses* is the second.

It is this freedom that gives meaning to the " apostolic succession " from Shakespeare to Hamnet; this is the power handed on by father to spiritual son. In the very writing of *Hamlet* Shakespeare won a self-understanding that is itself the gift he transfers. The knowledge the play provides is not simply of guilt and betrayal, an ineluctable pattern forever to be repeated, but of the nightmare of history from which Shake-

speare awoke as he understood the causes and their pattern. The play, understood in Stephen's sense, is an act of creation about the conditions that had to be overcome before the act could take place. There is no need to elaborate the relevance of this to Stephen's rejection of the priesthood in the *Portrait* or to the parallels with *Ulysses.* Like *Hamlet,* it is a work of art about the nature and conditions of freedom: hence the references to Shakespeare and *Hamlet,* the symbolism of paternity, the relationship of Bloom and Stephen, and the irony that plays about Stephen, an irony that he himself is beginning to cultivate. Its theme, too, is the conditions that must be overcome before it itself can be conceived and written, but it is completed in self-understanding—a creation concerned with its own conception. But its conception and existence are representative of all acts of human freedom. Stephen, in his slow growth from a " lyrical " to an " epical " relation to the world, with the " dramatic " foreshadowed in and actualized by *Ulysses,* becomes a universal symbol. Leopold Bloom stands as a kind of *terminus ad quem.* By this interdependence they form one figure: when they both look into Bella Cohen's mirror the one face of Shakespeare appears (553); they meet and depart—

> Both then were silent?
> Silent, each contemplating the other in both mirrors of the reciprocal flesh of theirhisnothis fellowfaces. (687)

In the course of the day Stephen begins to realize more fully what is necessary. The complement of his argument about *Hamlet* is his abrupt remark in the brothel—

> What went forth to the ends of the world to traverse not itself. God, the sun, Shakespeare, a commercial traveller, having itself traversed in reality itself, becomes that self. Wait a moment. Wait a second. Damn that fellow's noise in the street [a noise that is " the one great goal of history ": see 35]. Self which it itself was ineluctably preconditioned to become. *Ecco!* (494)

Behind that sudden illumination lie Aristotle and Stephen's aesthetic theory.

If Joyce's art seems centripetal (or to use a term a recent critic has employed, " cultic "), if *Ulysses* seems to substitute for the characters and action we expect in a novel the one

XUM

character of Joyce himself raised to a symbolic significance, the theory he puts into Stephen's mouth provides the reason. Or perhaps only the rationalization. In any case, once Stephen argues that the artist's experience *is* his world, a book about the artist himself may, granted the necessary self-understanding, also reveal the world objectively—so objectively indeed that it includes the artist. Moreover, the argument even points to the technique Joyce adopted. The interior monologue presents the subject and object united in continuous acts of perception and knowledge. Knower and known are revealed as actualized in the one epiphany.

The strongly Aristotelian flavour of the theory in *Ulysses* at least corrects a fault in that of the *Portrait.* There Stephen had made a distinction between beauty and truth, defined art in terms of the former, but had left the distinction vague and uncertain. Moreover, the way he had put the point about kinetic emotions in art was open to the objection implicit in Aquinas's remark that

> a craftsman, as such, is commendable, not for the will with which he does a work, but for the quality of the work. Art, therefore, properly speaking, is an operative habit. And yet it has something in common with the speculative habits: since the quality of the object considered by the latter is a matter of concern to them also, but not how the human appetite may be affected towards that object. For as long as the geometrician demonstrates the truth, it matters not how his appetitive faculty may be affected, whether he be joyful or angry: even as neither does this matter in a craftsman. (IIa, lvii, 3)

In *Ulysses* he makes clear what he signally failed to account for in the *Portrait*—that art is more than a craft, that the artist and scientist both have truth as their end, even though there is a difference between the kind of truth they discover and the way in which they express it. In the *Portrait* Stephen fails to make the distinction between beauty and truth clear because in *art,* his real subject, both are involved. Similarly, once he recognizes this, his point about kinetic emotions being incapable of producing art needs restatement. What he means, as *Ulysses* makes clear, is that the full truth about human life (or about anything for that matter) cannot be discovered in certain states of mind—that is, while the knower is in a kinetic, emo-

XUM

tional relation to the known. This is very different from saying that art properly so-called cannot result from certain emotions; it is to say rather that only a limited truth, if any, is possible in art conceived in such circumstances. It points to different attitudes or states of the whole personality rather than to different and irreconcilable emotions.

In so far as art is craft Aquinas is naturally right: art is "a perfection not of the maker, but of the thing made" (IIa, lvii, 5). But Stephen's argument in *Ulysses* (and earlier on the kinetic emotions) is concerned not with the thing made but with the *conditions* of artistic creation. On this point, he argues that the apprehension of truth is essential and in so far as the artist does apprehend it he, like any other man, does also perfect his nature. Since all we can know of an artist's apprehension of truth is from his art it is possible to say that in so far as it does reveal truth it records a perfection of the artist—but the artist as knower (or "scientist") not as maker. We might sum up Joyce's point by saying that for the highest art—that is, the most profoundly truthful—the "artistic temperament," with its kinetic reactions to the world, is a handicap. As he says in *Stephen Hero,* great art can spring only from the "classical temper," the "most stable mood of the mind" (182); in *Ulysses* it is Bloom who represents the "scientific temperament" that Stephen, for all his superior knowledge and imagination, has yet to achieve (667). Only time and patience will bring it, once he knows what it is he must achieve. He tells himself many times during the day that "evening will find itself in me, without me" (51); he knows that he has no need of Mulligan—"Take all, keep all. My soul walks with me, form of forms" (45); he knows too that as they depart from the library it is not the moment to free himself from external "nets"—"That lies in space which I in time must come to, ineluctably" (214), and Bloom passes by. Time is with him, the seed of freedom in him has begun to sprout, he may

> Cease to strive. Peace of the druid priests of Cymbeline, hierophantic: from wide earth an altar. (215)

The University of Melbourne

XUM

ULYSSES AND THE COMEDY OF THE IMMOBILIZED ACT

BY STANLEY POSS

(" Dear Mr. Germ's Choice: This is toilet you know you have left me in gutter despair . . .")

The Argument

My intention here is to account for the increasing technical virtuosity of the second half of *Ulysses* as it culminates in " Circe " in terms of that meeting of Stephen and Bloom which was " an instant of all but union." [1] My premises appear below, and since the validity of the interpretation depends on them I must state them rather fully.

Private Carr

(*His cap awry, advancing to Stephen.*) Say, how would it be, governor, if I was to bash in your jaw?

Stephen

(*Looks up in the sky.*) How? Very unpleasant. Noble art of self-pretence. Personally, I detest action. (555) [2]

So, it may be thought, did Joyce. The principal act of Bloomsday takes place off stage, that is in 7 Eccles Street; and though it is in a way the still point of Joyce's turning Word, we apprehend it obliquely, as its ramifications are filtered through Mr. Bloom. For the rest, there is plenty of talking, everybody moves around a good bit (Bloom somewhat above the normal pace when he leaves Kiernan's), those who have money drink (except Father Conmee) and, in lesser quantities, eat, those who don't have money cadge drinks from friends, there is some singing and some betting and some gartersnapping

[1] I cannot remember where I first saw this (by now) commonplace. The title of this paper is taken from an early insight of Ernst Robert Curtius.

[2] Page references are to The Bodley Head *Ulysses*, London, 1937.

XUM

(" *Sonnez la cloche*! "), and somewhere around Stephen's Green cyclists are racing. The Dubliners' day, all told (and Joyce's chaffering allincluding most farraginous chronicle seems to try to tell all), is remarkably like Pope's list of Homer's themes—banquets, sports, loves, pursuit of a woman.[3] This is not an endorsement of Bennett's idea that Joyce chose " the dailiest day possible," or of Daiches' later observation that June 16, 1904 is not even a normally dull day, it is uncommonly trivial. Laforgue's sad sigh, " Ah! *La vie est quotidienne*," obviously hit Joyce congenially enough in his metaphysics (" How a man ties his shoelaces or eats his egg in the morning gives a better clue to his differentiation than how he goes to war "), but a day in which one attends a funeral, a birth and a brothel, is chased from a bar and cuckolded, but also given a prolonged closeup of Gertie's blue undies (she had " four dinky sets, with awfully pretty stitchery " [334]), and meets, finally, one's " son," seems to reveal a strong melodramatic impulse within the official quotidian framework. But one can say all this and still not feel that anything " happens "; and that this idea even occurs to one suggests a basic problem in the book, especially when the meeting of Father and Son presumably brings the main psychological currents of the book to a head—always in characteristically ambivalent Joycean terms of course.

The corollary of this is apparent: if nothing " really happens," something, it may be assumed, happens " symbolically."[4] Edmund Wilson however thinks something may in fact have happened. He was one of the first to take a cheerful view of the meeting of Ulysses and Telemachus, and he thought it was " possible that Molly and Bloom, as a result of Bloom's meeting with Stephen, will resume normal marital relations " and that Stephen will go away to write *Ulysses* in ten years (Mulligan had alluded to Stephen's boast that he would write something in ten years [236]; *Ulysses* is dated " Trieste-Zürich-Paris, 1914-1921 ").[5] On the issue of the resumption of " normal marital

[3] Hugh Kenner, " Joyce's *Ulysses*: Homer and Hamlet," *Essays in Criticism*, 2 (Jan., 1952), 92.

[4] There is no connection intended here with Kenneth Burke.

[5] Edmund Wilson, *Axel's Castle: A Study in the Imaginative Literature of 1870-1930* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931), p. 202.

With this should be compared William Empson's recent genial polemic (" The

XUM

relations," one doubts that Poldy's goodnight nuzzling, "with obscure prolonged provocative melonsmellonous osculation," (695) amounts to much in the way of evidence for those who imagine that there will be some changes on June 17, for his last act of the day is hardly "progressive"; he is "the manchild in the womb." (697) Stephen of course may have gotten from Bloom what he needed, a view of the Bloomstuff of humanity, a way out of his solipsism (I believe Joyce wants us to think that something of the sort happened), but the evidence here depends on Mulligan's statement concerning Stephen's ambitions, and the dateline, which, it may be argued, is really outside the book. Anyhow it is dubious business to posit a view of a book which is based in part on an act which takes place ten years after the book is over. (I would not dismiss the issue here, because it is central to the interpretation I want to develop, but I must postpone the discussion for a little.)

If we accept provisionally the view that nothing "positive" has "really happened" when Ulysses and Telemachus (or Christ and Satan [Damon], or body and soul [Orwell], or thesis and antithesis, or Mutt and Jeff) meet, we find ourselves in somewhat the same position as the gull who has been left beside an oak stump with a burlap sack into which ideally a snipe will fly at midnight. We rebel at this. We don't want to think with Dr. Gogarty that *Ulysses* is the biggest legpull in literature, and yet—. (It is rather a remarkable thing that the fear of being taken in still attends the book after thirty years

Theme of Ulysses," *The Kenyon Review*, 18 [Winter, 1956], pp. 26-52), in which he argues that there is nothing in the book to prevent one from assuming that Stephen returned, at the covert or subconscious urging of Bloom, to Eccles Street sometime shortly after June 16 to have an affair with Molly. This saved Stephen's life (and thus Joyce's), and permitted him to become the great author of the book he had promised in 10 years, and it also put an end to Bloom's inability to have relations with his wife, with the result that the Blooms produced a son after Stephen/Joyce had left for Europe who "would now be about fifty years old." But if Molly is not in fact pregnant by Boylan, her son by Bloom (with Stephen as proxy godfather) does Bloom little good, in spite of all the talk about how much he needs a son, for he is still apparently destined to become "the aged impotent disfranchised ratesupported moribund lunatic pauper." (686) I find Empson's article impressive chiefly because he persuasively urges his point (that Bloom in some way wants to be and understands that he needs to be cuckolded by Stephen) without in the least making Poldy into a repellent Popeye kind of figure.

of responsible criticism, but that the ghost has not been laid is evident from the embarassment of many Joyceans concerning *Finnegans Wake*.) So, like Stephen, having failed on one level we pitch the argument up a notch, and arguing backwards, convince ourselves that it was possible something happened in the vicinity of Mrs. Cohen's house that escaped us (after all, there was a lot going on); and because of the attractiveness of such a possibility, the symmetry it works, we tend to give tacit recognition to the possibility of the possible as possible, maintaining simultaneously the right to disbelieve in case further evidence turns up. That this situation is logically contradictory and paradoxical should not trouble us; after all, there are areas in all our lives—God for some, television for others—in which we find it possible to believe and disbelieve together.

My position is probably apparent: I believe that there is no transcendental significance in the meeting of Stephen and Bloom, and I believe that Joyce was so unusually skittish on this issue that he pulled out all the stops of his prodigious technique to hold at arm's length the implications of "Jewgreek is greekjew." (479)

The Proof

Joseph Frank has spoken of Joyce's assumption "that a unified spatial apprehension of his work would ultimately be possible."[6] To bring that about Joyce, along with Pound and Eliot, depended on the principle of reflexive reference, wherein "the meaning-relationship is completed only by the simultaneous perception in space of word-groups which, when read consecutively in time have no comprehensible relation to each other."[7] Frank thinks that Joyce wanted to achieve the sense of simultaneous actions, so that the facts of the book must be reconstructed from clues scattered sometimes hundreds of pages apart,[8] but I believe he somewhat overstates the case for the simultaneity of the book. *Ulysses* has been called a single extended epiphany, and one feels occasionally that such a description is just, as when Stephen, seeing his dead mother,

[6] Joseph Frank, "Spatial Form in Modern Literature," in *Criticism: The Foundations of Modern Literary Judgment*, edited by Schorer, Miles, and McKenzie (Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1948), p. 385.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 383.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 385.

cries " Raw head and bloody bones! " (549) echoing Bloom's thoughts four hundred pages earlier on the " wretched brutes there at the cattlemarket waiting for the poleaxe to split their skulls open." (159) Sometimes however there seems no attempt at anything as highpowered as a spatial integration involved in the elaborate pattern of cross-references, as when we read of Stephen's version of an evening at Oxford in which " A deaf gardener, aproned, masked with Matthew Arnold's face, pushes his mower on the sombre lawn watching narrowly the dancing motes of grasshalms " (5), and discover in the catchall Nighttown scene five hundred pages afterwards that " The Siamese twins, Philip Drunk and Philip Sober, two Oxford dons with lawnmowers, appear in the window embrasure. Both are masked with Matthew Arnold's face." (492) Here and in some of the other echoes the effect is at best that of an attempt to achieve a formal verbal container for the phenomenal flux.

Nor do I think valid Frank's idea that *Ulysses*, because of the insuperable demands of Joyce's mnemotechnique, cannot be read, but only reread, since one must have the whole in hand before he can understand any part.[9] Possibly no one has ever caught all the echoes which thread the narrative, even with Hanley's *Word-Guide to Ulysses* as a crutch, but still the reader with somewhat less than total recall can catch enough to keep the book in shape, if he is more than normally alert. (After all, it is the farced epistol to the *hibruws*, though it is not usylessly unreadable.)

There is in Frank however an issue seminal to my ideas on *Ulysses*. He adopts the naturalist/nonnaturalist split of the German art historian and philosopher of esthetics, Worringer, and demonstrates that naturalism in art, i. e., imitation of natural forms, flourishes in times when the prevailing worldview sees man and environment symbiotically related (classic Greek sculpture and architecture, the Italian Renaissance, the art of Western Europe through the nineteenth century, when the loving recreation of the external world degenerates into the *gemütlich* pastorals of the Royal Academy) and that " nonnaturalism," represented by a preoccupation with linear-geometrical forms in the plastic arts, reflects a view which sees

[9] *Ibid.*

XUM

disequilibrium, a parasitical and inimical relation between " container " and " thing contained." This inversion of Burke's Scene/Act ratio occurred in primitive times, in Egyptian monumental and pictorial art, in Oriental and Byzantine art (Yeats, " Sailing to Byzantium ": " Once out of nature I shall never take/My bodily form from any natural thing ") and Gothic sculpture, and in twentieth century art.[10] According to this view, the anarchy in the appearance of the natural world is reduced to the simplicity of line and plane, to forms which have the stability, harmony and sense of order which seem lacking in the whorled without aimed.[11] There does seem a peculiarly relevant relation here to Joyce, especially on the issue of primitivism. Children and savages we are told are animists; they confuse words and things, and thus see the world in a magical sense, technically speaking. Now critics have often accused Joyce of this confusion,[12] and when we remember Stephen's fascination in *Stephen Hero* and *A Portrait of the Artist* with Skeat's Etymological Dictionary, with the *sounds* of words, repeated over and over until the meaning was drained from them (as Flem Snopes is said sometimes to have chewed a nickel's worth of tobacco until the suption was out of it), with the dityramb in the *Portrait* where Stephen draws from his store of words the phrase " dappled seaborne clouds," we find it easy to see how Joyce could have announced, arrogantly enough, " I can do anything I want with words "; we see how he could have convinced himself that any given physical phenomenon could be reproduced or at least approximated in words (" Grossbooted draymen rolled barrels dullthudding "); and we see how he could have adopted, unconsciously or not, a view of the word as Logos or talisman. (The pun then becomes even nottier than the word.) Possibly Joyce can be accused of a kind of animism (though the charge should not be made naively, in view of the boaconstrictor hold he has on

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 389-90.

[11] We should have no difficulty in agreeing that the preceding statement reflects a nonexistent ideal. Worringer and Frank are aware that they are simplifying for clarification.

[12] Arland Ussher, *Three Great Irishmen: Shaw, Yeats, Joyce* (Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 1952), p. 152; D. S. Savage, *The Withered Branch: Six Studies in the Modern Novel* (Pellegrini and Cudahy, [1950]), p. 159.

words), but I feel this kind of issue tells one much less than it seems to. To return to Frank: the premise, we remember, was that a nonnaturalistic artjob is the esthetic equivalent of a disenchanted *Weltanschauung*. Is *Ulysses* then nonnaturalistic? It would be difficult to deny that it is in part, at least. Philip Toynbee has said that it is hard to exaggerate the differences between the early and later parts of the book in method, intention and texture,[13] and we must surely agree that one has hard going if he tries to read " Sirens " for instance naturalistically. Toynbee's idea is that the later sections of the book expel us increasingly from the " charmed circle of the narrative " into the harsh and alien areas of pedantic scholarship and roughhouse, and he equates this Joycean obsession, the fascination of what's difficult, the endless deviations from the strait and narrative, with the neurasthenic trait of inviting, then embittering love.[14] We do not need to go this far, but we can say that from " The Wandering Rocks " episode on, *Ulysses* requires increasingly greater concentration, until one is forced finally to read on the naturalistic and nonnaturalistic levels simultaneously. (Not that one hasn't had to do this all along: it is a question of degree.) It would be symmetrical indeed if the book began to manifest this tendency with the conclusion of " The Wandering Rocks," the centrally placed episode to which the book as a whole stands in a macrocosmic relation. Unfortunately we must break the symmetry somewhat, since at least three of the earlier chapters, Stephen on the Beach, the Newspaper Office, and the Shakespeare discussion in the Library, contain elements of the virtuoso linguistic freebooting that becomes so prominent later. Still, compared in large with the fireworks of " Circe " or " The Oxen of the Sun," the first half of *Ulysses* seems if not tame, at least tamer.

In the first part of the book the issues are drawn, but they do not yet have to be faced. We understand dimly that Poldy and Stephen are each other's *Doppelgänger*, that they stand to one another as Pip and Magwitch or Septimus Smith and Mrs. Dalloway or Raskolnikov and Svidrigaïlov; but the thick rich sensuous stuff of the Joyce world causes us to give our attention

[13] Philip Toynbee, "A Study of James Joyce's Ulysses," in *James Joyce: Two Decades of Criticism*, edited by Seon Givens (Vanguard Press, 1948), p. 249.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 246.

elsewhere. In fact the " density " of this world is sometimes so tangible that one becomes conscious through Bloom of the weight of one's body, he feels kinesthetically that in spite of the odors of paralysis and decay the scene is itching, squirming with life. I think this is a sufficiently unique achievement (though in a quite different way some of Hopkins' sonnets play on the sense of kinesthesia) which amounts not to a description or a simple recall but a recreation, in which one shares totally, physically, viscerally—not to put too Lawrencian a point on it. Here if anywhere the Celtic Shapesphere (or Jakespeer) is most unequivocally " magical "; here is the heroism of building a world that makes Joyce's Errorland " epic," in Dr. Tillyard's definition.[15] It is no wonder that with this world to absorb us we are content to enjoy the pleasures of merely circulating with Poldy, content in fact to let the book's larger enduring architectural qualities of which Mr. Gilbert speaks so earnestly go by the board.

Later however it becomes apparent that Ulysses and Telemachus are tending ineluctably toward each other, and as they do, not the plot but the technique thickens. (Significantly, two of the earlier chapters wherein Bloom's and Stephen's paths cross, " Aeolus " and " Scylla and Charybdis " are among the more highly wrought episodes of the first part of the book.) And when the pair meet in the Holles Street Hospital, only an hour or so from epiphany time, it is in terms ranging from medieval romances (" And sir Leopold sat with them for he bore fast friendship to sir Simon and to this his son young Stephen and for that his languor becalmed him there after longest wanderings insomuch as they feasted him for that time in the honourablest manner " [371]) to drunken streetcorner harangues (" You coming long? Whisper, who the sooty hell's the johnny in the black duds? Hush! Sinned against the light and even now that day is at hand when he shall come to judge the world by fire. . . . Elijah is coming. Washed in the Blood of the Lamb. Come on, you winefizzling ginsizzling booseguzzling existences! Come on, you doggone, bullnecked, weasleyed, beetlebrowed, hogjowled, peanutbrained fourflushers, false alarms and excess baggage! " [409]) . Wyndham Lewis

[15] In a lecture at Seattle, Washington, October 20, 1955.

particularly resents Joyce's affinities with what he calls the "empty muscularities of Nashe,"[16] and though I rather like that sort of thing (the muscularity) I can't deny that the gymnastic swoop and daring of the style seems somehow disproportionate to the idea—as if with a melodramatic flourish and a twirling of mustaches the showman of Bloomsday—

> Oh, on his toe the table is turning, the broom's
> Balancing up on his nose, and the plate whirls
> On the tip of the broom! Damn, what a show, we cry:
> The boys stamp, and the girls
> Shriek, and the drum booms
> And all comes down, and he bows and . . .

draws the limits of the diaphane ("Oh, those transparent") to reveal a *corps de ballet* of scrofulous seals and a man with a blue guitar, while the main act, cunningly disguised as the Lord's Prayer on a grain of rice, can only be seen in a seedy tent down toward the end of the Midway.

Joyce of course was aware of this aspect of his work; he has been reported saying that the idea of his books is always simple but the working out of the idea is complicated, and he has suggested that if we really want to know something about the way he works we should spend some time considering the interaction of design and statement in the Book of Kells, "the fountainhead of Irish inspiration."[17] I believe Herbert Read was the first to call attention to the relation of the elaborated, stylized designs of early Irish art—illuminated manuscripts, the Cross of Cong—to *Finnegans Wake*. This suggestive analogy has probably occurred to many others, but it does seem in its way to say something about the characteristic movement of Joyce's mind (one thinks also of *Tristram Shandy* in this connection), though one would not want to push it; and of course knowing Joyce's intent doesn't explain his achievement. (Mythopoeic views of the book frequently demonstrate the intentional fallacy: Joyce said "This is how it is to be," so of course Mr. Gilbert explains "This is how it is.") The point is I take it that something important is going on in the Hospital scene—"sir Leopold that had of his body no manchild for

[16] Wyndham Lewis, *Time and Western Man* (Chatto and Windus, 1927), p. 123.

[17] From a letter by Joyce, quoted in Joseph Prescott, "Local Allusions in Joyce's *Ulysses*," *PMLA*, 68 (December, 1953), 1223.

XUM

an heir looked upon him his friend's son and was shut up in sorrow for his forepassed happiness and as sad as he was that him failed a son of such gentle courage (for all accounted him of real parts) so grieved he also in no less measure for young Stephen for that he lived riotously with those wastrels and murdured his goods with whores" (373)—that according to D. S. Savage, Stephen is in danger here of passing into the "mystery of whoredom" wherein natural physical needs are divorced from the integrating power of the spirit,[18] and that he is in a condition of reckless drunken hubris which causes him to reject Bloom's charity, his hope for escape from the blind alley of his cupidinous solipsism, his Priapian frustration ("Everyman His Own Wife or A Honeymoon in the Hand"), in "accordance" with the psychological truism that we reject most violently what is most native to us; but that we are not likely to catch this perilous balance of identities sandwiched between layers of parody.[19] The issue here is not whether Joyce's parodies reveal the "subject," as do Beerbohm's, or Joyce himself, or whether Joyce really felt a special reverence for the writers he knocks about so unceremoniously ("Gentle Will is being roughly handled") but that he felt he had to protect his special slant from their influence, whether he was not parodying the thing itself but the comic misunderstandings and abuses of the thing, whether he did not in fact create parodigms, or in the "Hades" episode, parodignams; it is simply whether the undeviating rigor with which Joyce equates what he takes to be content and style is tenable as an *ultimate* controlling principle. There are no half measures in *Ulysses,* it goes the whole hog; and though there are elements of the heroic in such an "inhumanly" singleminded effort (as the classic tragic-heroic figure identifies himself wholly with one issue, disregarding contending claims: Antigone does not admit the rival good of citizenship, she *is* The Sister), the question arises whether in *Ulysses* Joyce has pushed a crucially significant but yet provisional insight beyond its legitimate capacities; for I am not being flippant in the observation that you can attempt to teach a donkey to sing Mozart, but you must be

[18] *The Withered Branch,* p. 165.
[19] The surrealistic metaphor stands.

prepared to accept the possibility that the accomplishment is not in the nature of the beast.

It may be that Joyce was attempting an impossibility. Harry Levin and Philip Toynbee think he was, the latter stating that Joyce's whole theory is wrong; for "clarity to oneself is so far from being the same as clarity to others that the process of writing is often one of deliberately surrendering an attained precision simply for the sake of rendering oneself intelligible. From a pure and private height of clarity the writer must *debase* his words and method into intelligibility." [20] In the "Nausicaa" episode Joyce's method works splendidly (we remember that Bloom appears by himself here; there is no "danger" for Joyce to avoid, since Stephen is out of sight), but in the "Oxen of the Sun" the logical theorizing mind is deserted by decorum, propriety, the least exceptionable esthetic principle of discretion, whose function is to control, to forbid excess.[21] Here we may have an illustration of Joyce's own Dublingänger: a fellow Irishman claims that there is a schism in Joyce between his "hard and arid" Jesuitical mind and his lowermuddlecrass Dublin emotionalism.[22] It is important to distinguish the issue here: it is not that we are pleased, Strachey style, to find schizoid traits in our culture heroes (leaving aside the fact that our culture heroes are in fact prodigiously extended versions of ourselves), but that Joyce's "failure" to synthesize these elements in Stoom and Blephen "produces" the ultimate failure of the book: Molly ingests Stephen, absorbing him as an amoeba absorbs nutriment; Bergsonian gush (Yeats' "furies of complexity") overwhelms Aristotelian form ("Marbles of the dancing floor"); the Husband no longer stands central in the composition; the Ulyssean balance is lost.[23]

For the analyst Rolf Loehrich however this is of little moment. His idea is that in the quests of Bloom and Stephen for the "riches of life . . . both learn to release processes of growth during which these riches are gained," that "their gains instruct every man who wishes to engage in the 'secret life,'" and that "if the secrets are self-experienced in consecutive

[20] *James Joyce: Two Decades of Criticism*, p. 275.
[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 277-78.
[22] Arland Ussher, *Three Great Irishmen*, p. 137.
[23] *Ibid.*

spiritual 'deaths and rebirths' which are dream-deaths correlated to structural changes of the mind, and if self-awareness of these transfigurations is gained, wisdom is gained." [24] Loehrich's is the most fullscale attempt yet to claim not only that "something happens" in Nighttown, but that everything happens:

Both [Bloom and Stephen] are sexually and emotionally impotent and devoid of creative power, both regain potency and creativity.
Both are enmeshed in seemingly insolvable conflicts, both solve them correctly and establish the preconditions of a harmonious and joyful life.
Both find themselves in a state of sinfulness, understand the deadly effect of their sins, repent and atone.
Both learn to submit to God's judgment and to accept His Grace in humility.
Bloom has lost his son Rudy, searches for him, and finds him—the 'soul' and 'spirit.'
Stephen has lost his father, searches for him, and finds him—the 'body' and the 'soul.'
Bloom and Stephen, in their mutual and interrelated quests, represent Man fallen who finds in his redeemer the transforming, saving powers.[25]

According to Loehrich amazing things happen in *Ulysses*:

They [Stephen and Bloom] bet on the horse Throwaway in the Gold Cup Flat and win at 20-1.
They travel around the world with Sinbad the Sailor.
They regain the leg lost by amputation.
The ferocious beast is tamed.
They wander with the chosen people from Egypt and reach the Promised Land under the leadership of Moses.
They are drawn into the wars between the nations, and into the final war, Armageddon, which ends with the victory of the KING and the building of the temple.
The ashlar is shaven.
They are reborn in the womb of the QUEEN, the Eternal Mother.
The puzzle of the circle to be squared is solved.[26]

Now we have no right to smile patronizingly at Mr. Loehrich's metaphors, which would seem not unreasonable if they

[24] Rolf R. Loehrich, *The Secret of Ulysses* (The Compass Press, 1953), p. 1.
[25] *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

in fact do stand in a functional relation to the book. I must defend my interpretation by showing that they do not.

A Euphemeristic Reading of the Felix Copula of Shame's Voice: this seems to be what Loehrich is trying to bring off. He will " demonstrate that *Ulysses* is an account of how Man gains revelation, how he experiences it, why he can experience it, where he experiences it, and what is actually revealed."[27] His intent is therapeutic; we can put ourselves right by symbolically reënacting with the protagonists the drama of death and rebirth which culminates in the " Circe " episode. I am not competent to judge Loehrich's psychoanalytical premises, which seem to be that one attains the " riches of life " by the purge of recapitulating one's past actions; but there is at least doubt among psychologists as to the efficacy of this kind of confessional. Some " reformed Freudian " behaviorists hold in fact that reënactment codifies error rather than teaches insight. We needn't stay on these heights for long though, because Loehrich is quite explicit on what it takes to be reborn: one must surrender to the *lex eterna* (no quarrel here), become a faithful servant of its temporal representative, the " King " (read " vested authority "), and die to oneself (Rumbold's hanging of the croppy boy) so that one can become baptized in the amniotic fluid and reborn in the womb of the " Queen " (read " Cissy Caffrey " or " Molly "). Loehrich, it will be seen, is in complete opposition to the analysis of Richard Kain, who believes Joyce to be a serious satirist and social critic,[28] and who believes rather ingenuously that Bloom in the progress of the day makes discoveries about the falseness of various modern popular faiths.[29] In contrast Loehrich throws the whole weight of man's guilt on man (affinities here with the " existential " view of original sin represented by Kafka and Kierkegaard): Bloom and Stephen are stupid to rebel, for they are fighting themselves; they should give in to the *lex*. Here we have an enthymematic proposition, for the premise omitted in the " simple syllogism " just outlined is that there is some necessary vital connection between " King " and *lex* and between " King "

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 3.
[28] *Fabulous Voyager* (University of Chicago Press, 1947), pp. 5-6.
[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 167-69.

and " subject." It is as if we were asked to parse the statement, " The axle fell on his chest and he died of a broken heart."

There are many peripheral problems raised by Loehrich's book—the observation that " *Ulysses* is a book many know about but few read. It is studied by sophisticates and scholars, but hardly ever enjoyed "; [30] the strength of a critical method which relies so heavily on charts and tables; [31] the idea that Joyce is an analyst conducting a " comprehensive survey of the analytical materials and dream reports of two patients, Bloom and Stephen "; [32] the implications of " Joyce presented his message by giving it the aesthetic form of what he called a novel instead of presenting the message, let us say, in a scientific treatise " [33] (structure presumably an artifice, a peg for the " message "?) —but one could become lost in these riches; it is better to say with Dryden " Here is God's plenty," and go on to three modest issues which yet have considerable bearing on Loehrich's argument. The first is a misreading based on a blunder of Bloom which is itself another instance of the great failure of communication between him and Stephen. The latter has been knocked down by Private Carr [34] outside Bella Cohen's, and lies in the street mumbling " Who Goes With Fergus." Bending low to catch the fragments of verse, Bloom " communes with the night ": " Face reminds me of his poor mother. Ferguson, I think I caught. A girl. Some girl. Best thing could happen him. . . ." Now Mr. Loehrich: " Ferguson is also the name of the young lady Stephen is obviously in love with—and in this sense, Fergus is correlated to heart, love." [35] It does not seem that we can excuse Mr. Loehrich here with the plea that he is speaking metaphorically; he obviously means what he says, and he intends his " correlation " as part of the evidence that Bloom and Stephen attain the " riches of life."

Point two: Poldy's halfIrish rose is by no means aware that

[30] Loehrich, p. 4.
[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 56-72.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 5.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 127.
[34] Oddly enough Joyce's greatest enemy in Zürich was an English attaché named Carr, who played in a performance of " The Importance of Being Earnest " for which Joyce was manager and factotum, and who became engaged in a bitter serio-comic wrangle with Joyce concerning the issue of reimbursement for a pair of morning trousers Carr had bought to play Jack Worthing in the comedy.
[35] Loehrich, p. 111.

her husband is a changed man as a result of his rebirth; she is still thinking about Boylan in no uncertain terms, though it is true that her final great apostrophe moves through Stephen toward Bloom as the Husband, in the Haveth Childers Everywhere sense. I have spoken earlier of Poldy's "Obscure . . . osculation," and the difficulty of equating it with any "advance" or change of heart or modification of the situation. We have also to consider the possibility of Molly's impregnation by Boylan (Bloom had considered this earlier [263]; and see also 353, 513, 677, 702), in spite of the fact that her menstrual flow commences while she lies in bed (728, 731), for she "transcends" regularity (729) as all else. Further, there is a very slight hint that Martha Clifford is actually Miss Dunne, Boylan's secretary (216, 271; and in addition compare the complex of relationships between Milly, Alec Bannon, Mulligan's brother, the Buck himself, and Stephen [19]), which is an attractive idea from the standpoint of the symmetry it effects, producing a quadwrangle where there was only a triangle. And as a last objection to the view that Joyce intended the Gnosis section of Ulysses to carry a transcendental weight, we have that big black dot in the original Shakespeare and Company edition as the answer to the question, "Where [had Bloom come to at the end of his travels]?"

My last point can be made very briefly, since I have stated it earlier. If, as Loehrich assumes, the chain of being from *lex eterna* through "King" to "Subject" were sound, we could not argue against his existential postulate that Bloom and Stephen should give over their discontent with the ineluctable modality (the way things are), since it represents, in temporal, symbolic form, themselves; the King or "vested authority" of the moment would then by definition be worthy of fealty. My objection is that the King is the weak link in Loehrich's chain, and that what we have here is a version of the Tudor myth, that classic argument for staying in line for which Dr. Tillyard seems to entertain such great respect, but which would probably appeal somewhat less to those down and out in Dublin and Sandymount—and Bloom is no doubt on the way "down."

We must then be grateful to Mr. Loehrich for his ability to think in a new key, but as for his interpretation, we must very

gratefully, with grateful appreciation, with sincere appreciative gratitude, in appreciatively grateful sincerity of regret, decline; for even if the cup of "Epps's massproduct, the creature cocoa" (637) which Stephen and Bloom share represents a communion, a synthesis of antithesis, we must remember the ultimate disposition of the cocoa: "The trajectories of their, first sequent, then simultaneous, urinations were dissimilar: Bloom's longer, less irruent, in the incomplete form of the bifurcated penultimate alphabetical letter who in his ultimate year at High School (1880) had been capable of attaining the point of greatest altitude against the whole concurrent strength of the institution, 210 scholars: Stephen's higher, more sibilant, who in the ultimate hours of the previous day had augmented by diuretic consumption an insistent vesical pressure." (663-64) And then Bloom, alone, feels "The cold of interstellar space, thousands of degrees below freezing point. . . ." (665)

The Peroration

I feel that a lot of the hue and cry about the "meaning" of *Ulysses* stems from a mistaken notion of its connection with Homer. Hugh Kenner has recommended that we need first of all in reading Joyce to rid ourselves of the memory of the Butcher and Lang translation of the Odyssey, for the Ulysses it canonized is fatal both to Joyce and Homer.[36] Now alongside of the Victorian Ulysses, Mr. Bloom seems a blasphemous parody, but if we look at the very literal translation of W. H. D. Rouse (1937) inspired by Pound we find startling correspondences; and if we look at Rabbi Ben Ezra's own words on the character of Odysseus—"Born un po' misero, don't want to go to war, little runt who finally has to do all the hard work, gets all Don Juan's chances with the ladies and can't really enjoy 'em. Circe, Calypso, Nausicaa. Always some fly in the ointment, last to volunteer on stiff jobs" [37]—we begin to wonder if this Odysseus is Homer's or Joyce's. Rouse has shown that Homer could kid the epic conventions, could indulge in Joycean word play ("Oh, Odysseus! You're odd-I-see, true to your name"), and could attach most whimsical etymologies to those

[36] "Joyce's *Ulysses*: Homer and Hamlet," p. 85.
[37] Letter to Rouse, quoted *Ibid.*, p. 86.

imposing proper names which reverberate so majestically in the " Miltonic " rollcalls.[38]

Thus Kenner's view that we should consider *Ulysses* a modern translation [39] is not so far out as it might seem, for Joyce apparently regarded Homer as a contemporary, a modern and sometimes comic poet (" Tradition and the Individual Talent " with a vengeance), and when we look at the Rouse translation we find ample justification for Joyce's view. (Not that " comtemporaneity " depends on puns.) It is Mulligan, for whom poetry is Swinburne, who represents the " traditional " view of the classics as hermetically sealed sanctities, with his talk of " the Attic note " (236) and of Hellenizing Ireland (5). All this is not to say that Joyce regarded Homer as a collection of " Bloomian commonplaces," but it is to insist that to call *Ulysses* a parody of Homer is inadequate.[40] We may think instead that Homer offered a paradigm on which Joyce could base his series of rapidly interchanging perspectives—so rapid they seem " simultaneous " or " spatial," in Frank's view—on basic human situations.

Now it is this idea of " simultaneous " perspectives that brings me back to the point of departure (" Longest way round is shortest way back "). Stephen's detestation of action was also Joyce's; [41] in this at least they may be identified. Edmund Wilson speaks of the " tremendous vitality " in Joyce, but remarks that there is very little movement; he calls this quality " symphonic rather than narrative." [42] I would prefer to call it " cinematographic," in the sense of Eisenstein's ideas on montage, among which is this definition of " overtonal montage ": the collective calculation of the work's total appeals, as it is chiefly manifested in a conflict between the principal tone of the piece (the dominant) and its overtone.[43] Critics have mentioned Joyce's alleged debt to film techniques, and Harry Levin notably has spoken of Joyce's " connection " with the great

[38] *Ibid.*, p. 89-91.
[39] *Ibid.*, p. 85.
[40] *Ibid.*, p. 93.
[41] *Axel's Castle*, p. 209.
[42] *Ibid.*
[43] Sergei Eisenstein, *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*, edited and translated by Jay Leyda (Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1949), p. 78.

Russian experimental film theorist, producer and writer,[44] whom Joyce had met in Paris. They were greatly interested in each other's work: Eisenstein found in Joyce's rapidly shifting "spatial" technique the kind of controlled kaleidoscopic effect he himself was working toward in films; Joyce was intensely interested in Eisenstein's plans for film presentations of inner monologues (he was going to treat *An American Tragedy* in this manner, but Hollywood got scared) and would have risked the little sight he had to see the Russian's productions, *Potemkin* and *October*.

Now I think this gets us somewhere, especially if we think of Joyce's montage technique as a kind of "symbolic action," which provides him with an imitation of action wherein he can utilize his "tremendous vitality," but which does not commit him to actual "movement." It furnishes an explanation of the really elusive quality of the book as a whole (critics usually talk about Joyce's "inhuman neutrality") in terms of the definition of "overtonal montage" just cited. It accounts for the sometimes mechanical tieups which attempt to suggest that if you have a birmseye view you see that nothing is irrelevant. It throws light upon the "static ideal" which the book imposes upon the "kinetic material"; the book is itself a "motion picture."[45] It offers a technical ground for the frequent observation that Joyce's characters move in space but don't develop in time, and it supports the view that Joyce saw Homer as a contemporary, that Joyce was keen on historical oneness, that his "message" was that the race doesn't change, that the good old days never were, that the glorious past and the degraded present are metaphors for one thing, and are both simultaneously mean, splendid, sordid, rich. It provides a structure for Frank's theories concerning Joyce's attempted spatialization, and also for Von Abele's fine comment on the teasingly ambivalent tone of the book (see again "overtonal montage"): "*Ulysses* . . . is neither the apotheosis of myth nor the denigration of modern culture, but the presentation of a fictive universe whose most amusing paradox is that, though saturated with death and *kitsch*, it yet gives off an authentic and inexhaustible aura of

[44] Harry Levin, *James Joyce: A Critical Introduction* (New Directions, 1941), p. 108.
[45] *Ibid.*, p. 129.

XUM

life."[46] It offers a way out of the dilemma implicit in the meeting of Bloom and Stephen, substituting a sequence of space- and time-obliterating montage patterns for the naked confronting of the fact that Jew is not Greek, that truth is not beauty nor science poetry, but yet allowing us the luxury of "feeling" it is a good thing we have each, that both represent in their inviolable separateness the irreducible bolus from which myths spring, the place where all the ladders start, that in the frustration is the triumph (though none of the characters knows it),[47] that where desolation is most acute fruition flowers unseen, and that the book is an illustration of this nightBlooming process. It makes us feel finally that Dublin in 1904 was in truth a center of paralysis, but that all the same a world in which one could get a kidney for three cents and a quart of porter for four cents can't be all bad.

Fresno State College, California

[46] Rudolph Von Abele, "*Ulysses*: The Myth of the Myth," *PMLA*, 69 (June, 1954), 364.

[47] Philip Edwards, "*Ulysses* and the Legends," *Essays in Criticism*, 5 (April, 1955), 127.